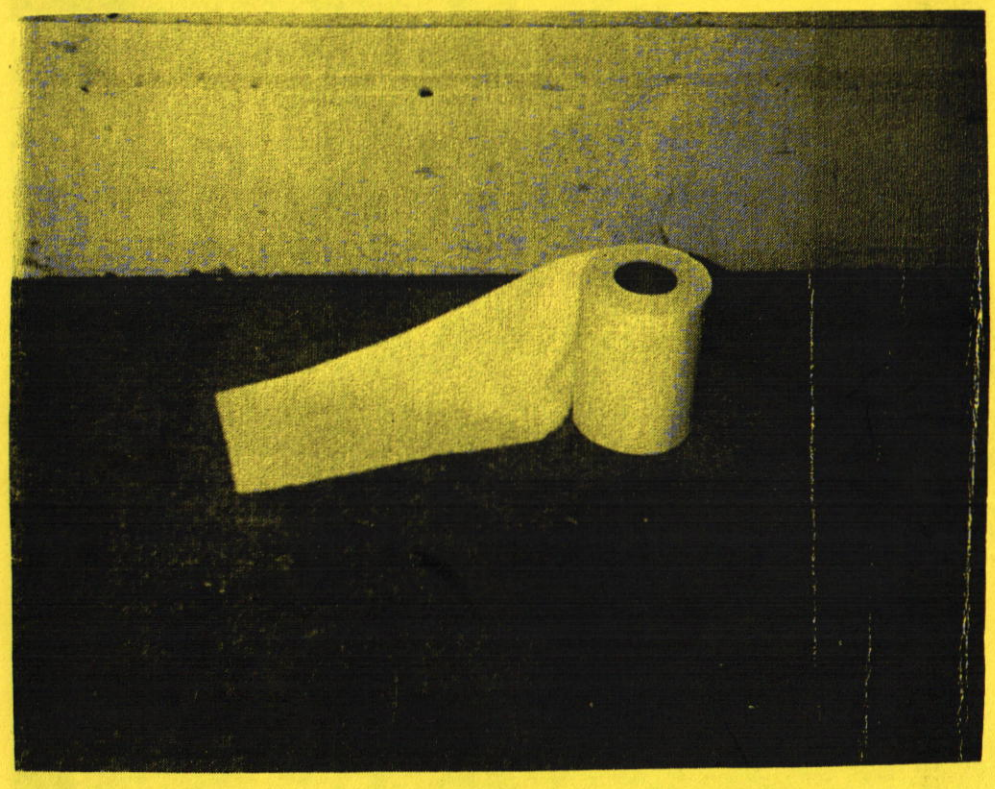


OUTPUNK

Focus on the Family

Hello again! Thanks for picking up this zine. I hope you enjoy it. I've got so much shit in my brain that it needs to come out somewhere. so here it is. I had intended to do this issue on newsprint for convenience and price. but decided I couldn't write for a zine unless it was a good old half-sized one.

I've been struggling to keep this stuff youth-oriented. So little queer stuff is written in a way that welcomes youth and doesn't assume experience or expertise. At the same time. I am getting a little tired of being stuck in "coming out" mode for the benefit of those who don't live in the same world that I do. Let's just say that this is a piece of the world that I see every day. translated for anyone who doesn't have the opportunity to view it. If. for whatever reasons. you find that the content and opinions within DO NOT reflect your own. then by all means make a fanzine that best expresses yourself.

Subscriptions: none
Back issues: none.
Ads: Classified ads free - up to 50 words. if you don't mind waiting a few years for it to run. Display ads are available for PUNK things. Send for a price list.
Next issue out ???????
Poetry: none.
All writing within is by me. Matt Wobensmith. unless credited otherwise. Go ahead and blame me - I don't care.
Big apology this issue goes out to the gals - upon assembling this. I realize it's almost totally guy stuff. I didn't mean for it to be that way - honest. For issue number 4. I need your contributions. If you got something to say. I wanna hear it! Get in touch.
This issue dedicated to guys who don't want to hear about women in queer punk. Some people just don't get it. do they?
Fax: (415) 567-6727
Email: OUTPUNKSF.aol.com

Outpunk / P.O. Box 170501 / San Francisco.CA 94117

SANITIZED By SWISHER
(800)444-4138

CLASSIFIEDS

Erik Core is gay acoustic punk. Loud, fast and angry. Available now - Erik Core "Jungle Forest Burning" casstte, $3 for 9 songs . Coming soon - "Angry America" featuring the song "Pissed Off", about growing up gay in the Midwest. Erik Core wants to play your house, party and club. West Coast tour coming soon. Phone (510) 601-8965. Write: 740A 14th St. #202, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Cara Crash lead and rhythm guitar. I just want to thrash. Lifers only. Sepultura, Pantera, girls, boys. Home: (415) 282-1832. Write: 440 Capp St. San Francisco, CA 94127.

Rockin' Girl Night will now be featured at the Continental in NYC on the first Saturday of every month. Therefore, expect many more shocking queer and girl rock extravaganzas! If you want to be on the Rockin' mailing list, leave your name and addressat (212) 875-7039.

this zine is $2.00. postpaid. anywhere in the world!

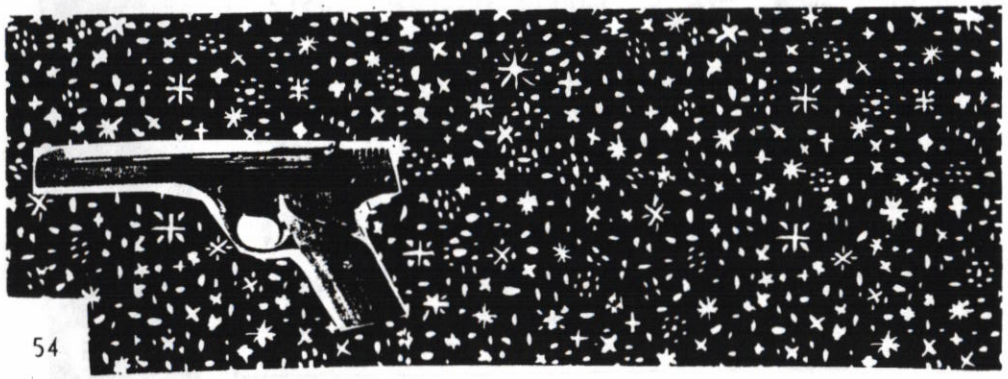
OUTPUNK
DANCE PARTY
an eleven band queer punk compilation
out now on LP / cass / CD - $8 ppd. US, $9 N. America, $10 ppd. world
not all queers like disco. Outpunk, PO Box 170501, San Francisco, CA 94117

Queer punk revolution? What do you think? Do you have a vision for the future? I do. If there's going to be a queer revolution in punk, or a female one, or non-white ones, we really need to think about what we want ultimately, and work towards it. I'm not saying it's that simple, because there are at least two things in our way. ONE - the attitudes within punk that treat us like second-class people, and TWO - the attitudes within ourselves that prevent us from trying, or that make us want to give up completely. This is no time for self-hate. There is no time for pity parties. It is time for action. You will be as happy as you let yourself be. Don't let anyone tell you differently.

Yes, I know it's not the most eloquent piece of writing, but it's a start. We all need to help each other, support each other, and stop creating division among ourselves. We need to accept the fact that we all may have different ideas of what this is about, but that we are all striving for the same things - love, acceptance, fun, and enlightenment. That means withholding judgement if you can't find something constructive to say. It means not making the easy put-down for the sake of being "funny". It's so easy to laugh, it's so easy to hate. It takes courage to be gentle and kind. Thanks Morrissey! Sometimes I think being happy is the most subversive thing you can possibly do.

A message in all this? Check it out. I can't help you. Only you can do that. I don't need to hear how rough it is - I know. I can't write for you or claim to represent you. If I am saying anything at all with this, it is that if I can do it, you most certainly can, too. So fucking do it.

You think you don't belong? You think it's you vs. the world? You say everything excludes you? Well, have you even tried? Do you even know? Are their barriers in front of you or are they in your fucking head? And ultimately, who is responsible for your comfort, anyway? Just wondering.



We're here, we're queer, and we love punk rock! So what does that mean to the punk scene at large? Do we even care what they think of us? What are their roles in the scenes that we create? I've developed the following list of do's and don'ts that are highly subjective. This is what, if anything, I am saying to straight people who are interested in queer punk.

DO:

-Realize that ideas that you might not understand may make perfect sense to us.

-Understand that queer punk is in its formative stages and may or may not have the expertise, security, or history that the rest of punk has, and that we are creating our own.

-Be supportive without turning it into your self-righteous cause to elevate you among your peers.

-Be aware that for us, punk is something we have chosen to hold on to as our culture, despite pressure to conform to mainstream gay society at large.

-Understand that sometimes we have to do things that aren't "punk" just to function, and that we don't have the easy social scene that straight punks have.

DON'T:

-Assume that we are complaining just to get attention.

-Pretend to be queer in an attempt to be supportive.

-Flirt with us unless you want us to fuck you.

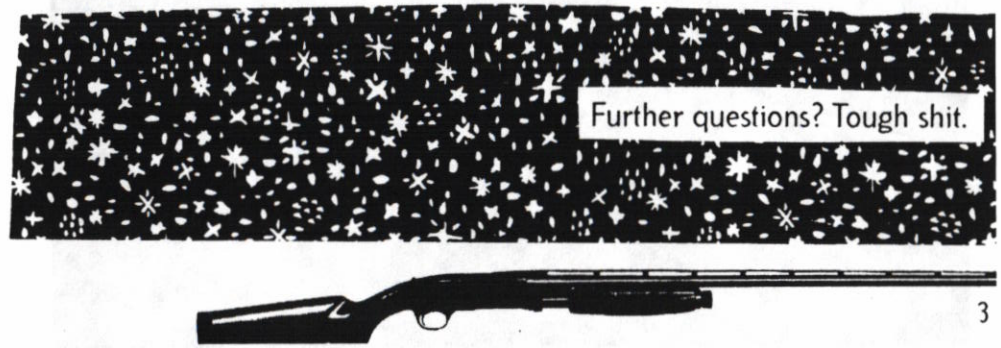
-Assume that we would want to have sex wih you in the first place.

-Tell us that we should be like so-and-so to be "good", "cool" or acceptable.

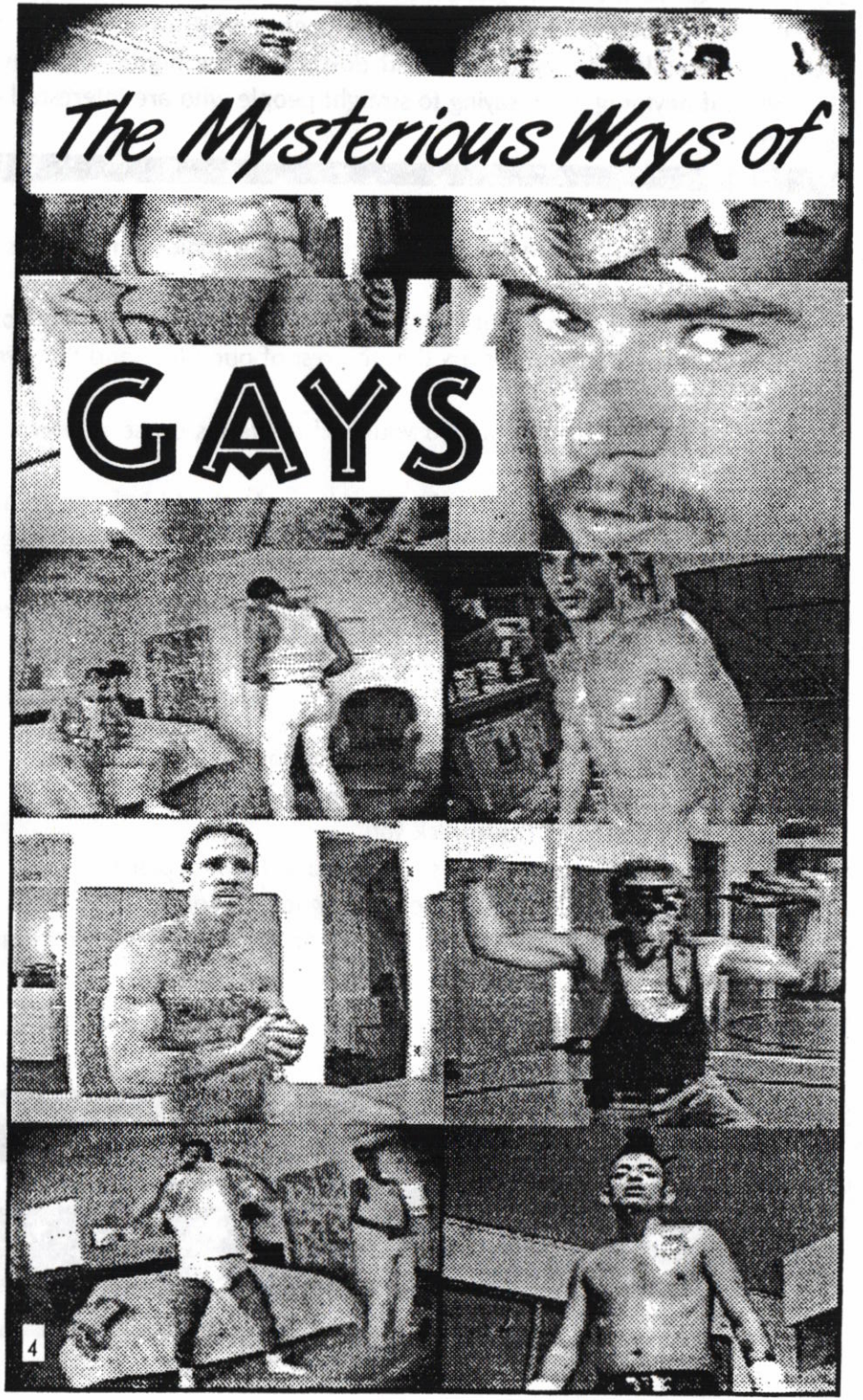
-Assume that we hate straights just because we devote time to promote our own queerness.

-Treat us as a novelty.

-Don't bother me.



Feeling like an alien on Planet Gay? Welcome to



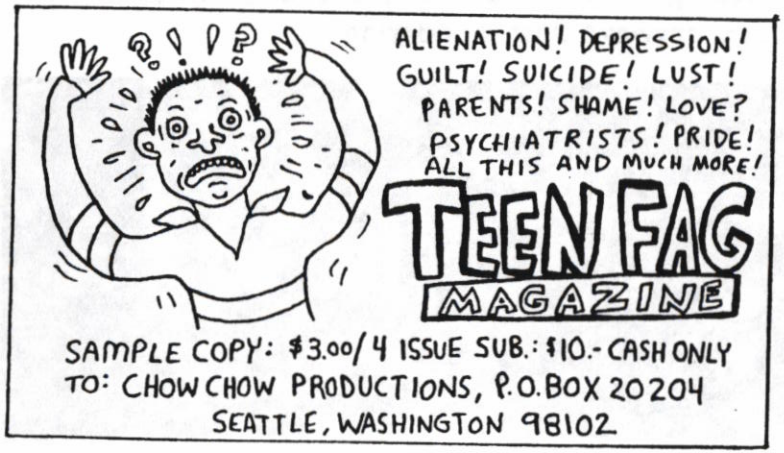
4. **Transgenderphobia is a fear and hatred** of gender non-conformity. It keeps many people from disclosing their true feelings and identities. This fear and hatred can cause many transgendered people to feel lonely, isolated, alienated, or unwanted. More than 50% of all transsexuals have attempted suicide. Many youth with transgendered feelings pick up hate-filled messages from society saying that they are bad or crazy. In turn they may feel like there is no one to talk to. Suicide may seem like the only way out.

5. **Gender-questioning youth** are at higher risks for homelessness, unsafe sex (including HIV disease), dropping out of school, and substance abuse. There is a severe lack of programs that are designed for transgendered youth. Gender-questioning youth have very few, if any, places to safely meet and socialize with other youth like themselves. They commonly have no role models from which to learn that they can have a very happy and successful future.

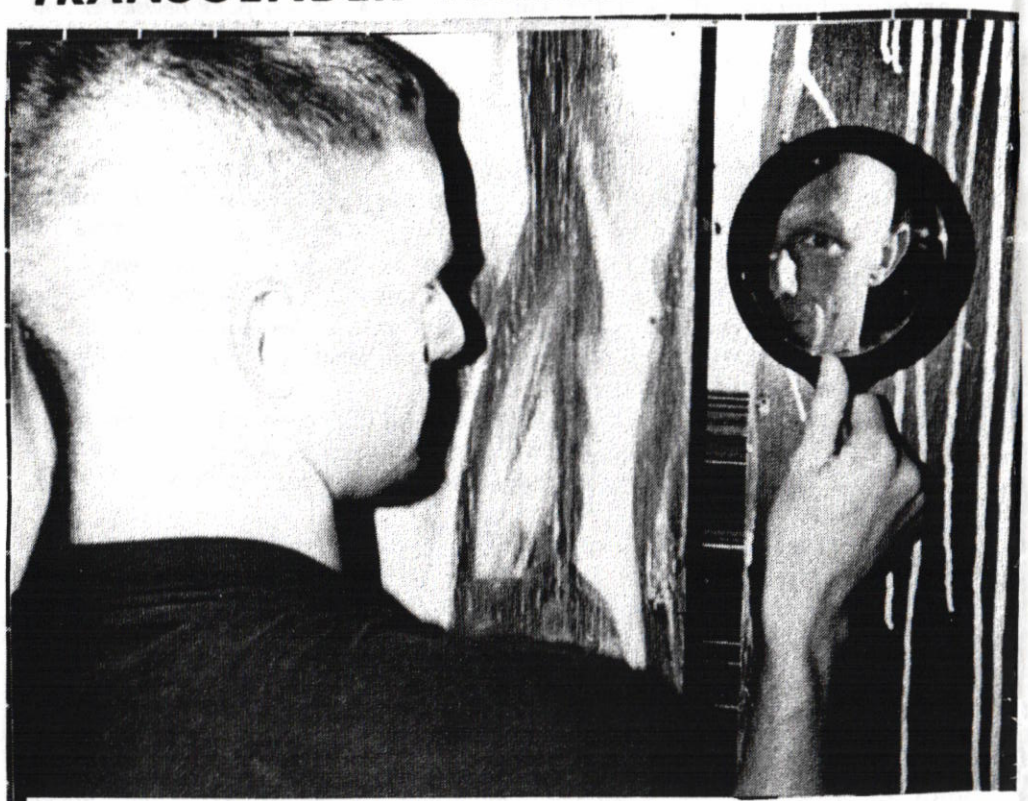
Transgendered people are male and female, young and old, heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual. They are visible and invisible. There are seven major groups recognized under what is termed the "transgender umbrella". They are differentiated by characteristics of gender behavior and assumption. This has been simplified for your reading. Life does not always fall neatly into categories or lists.

Crossdresser or "drag" - crossdressing for political or social activism, humor, or entertainment.
Transvestic fetishist - wearing articles of clothing associated with the "opposite" sex for erotic purposes.
Transvestite - crossdressing for emotional comfort.
Transgenderist - can also be an androgyne - presenting self as a gender blend for emotional comfort. Or, to resolve gender identity conflicts.
Transsexual - may or may not be motivated toward s.r.s. (sexual reassignment surgery). Living in a gender that is congruent with identity to resolve gender identity conflicts.
Man or Woman - lives in gender appropriate to gender identity and congruent with genitalia.

(check out zine listings for more info)



TRANSGENDER VISIBILITY



Dear Matt.

Thanks for the copy of *Outpunk*. I really like it. Let me tell you about the realization I just this second had. I'm 24 yrs. old and have been into crossdressing since before I can remember. I don't know why. Anyway, the realization is this though I am in the closet about it - only 3 people know. I'm realizing that I'm starting to care less, and in a sense psychologically coming out more. Also, despite this, all my life I've thought of myself as heterosexual. Even though I've always wanted to dress up and do it with men as well as women, but never have. My point is I've been wondering if I'm perhaps bi. I will investigate when the right situation arises. *name withheld by request.*

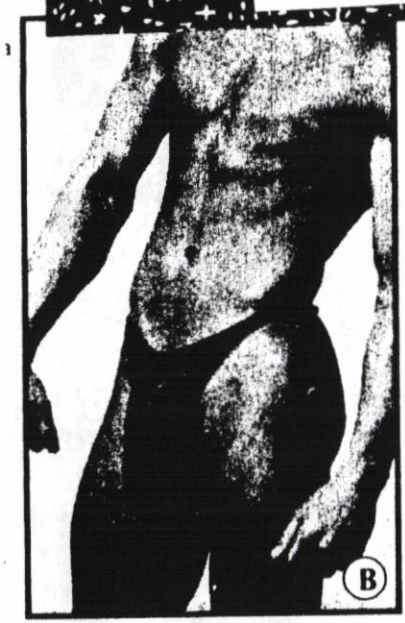
A FEW FACTS

1. **Approximately 3% of the general population** has significant feelings of discomfort about their gender (gender dysphoria), cross-dress, or are transsexual. These feelings may develop as a child or even as a teenager.
2. **The majority of people** experiencing cross-gender feelings are indistinguishable from others in their dress and manner. Most keep an appearance that is relatively "normal" and keep their feelings to themselves.
3. **Transgendered people are not mentally ill.** There are no greater incidents of psychosis, personality or mood disorders among the population with cross-gendered feelings than there are in the general population. However, many internalize society's view of them as bad, crazy, or evil and suffer from feelings of low self-worth.

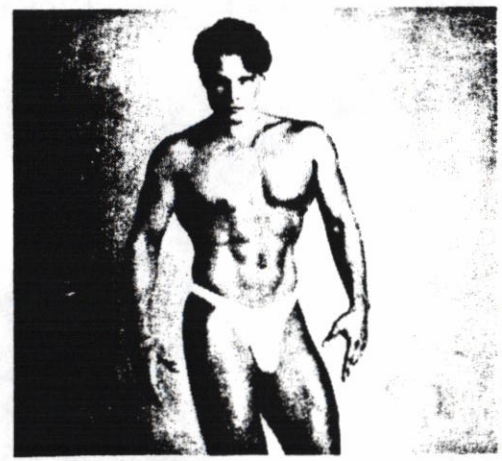
Business Directory

1 ▼ **Suzie's Adult Store**, Video Rentals/Sales/Viewing Booths. Adult Toys Corner of 2nd & Kietzke, 786-4557
2▼ **Bad Dolly's** - bar, slots, pool ttable Dancing 535 E.4th
3▼ **Smiley's Treasures** 1125 S. Wells Ave. 324-1119
RENO INFORMER Gay/Lesbian News Subscriptions, Classified/Business ads, 5150 Mae Anne Ave. STE.#213-185 826-2257
5▼ **Five Star Saloon**-bar, slots,pool tables 132 West St. 329-2878
6▼ **The Alley Club**, Slots, Pool Table, Fulton Alley off First St. 333-2808
7 **Brass Creations**-Unique Gifts 100 N. Sierra Town Ctr
13▼ **Steve's**, 1030 W. Second St.
1099 Club-Bar, Slots 1099 S. Virginia St.
15▼ **Visions**-Bar, Slots, Pool Table, D.J. Dancing 340
Eastern Onion Singing Telegrams 826-7070
Classic Hair Design, Vince, 829-2888
Judy Phoenix PhD, Psychologist 322-5055
Illusions Hair Design, Ezzy, 826-3833
Designing Mindz'Hair Design,,Jacob 323-5322
ERA Realty Central, Realtor J.Craig Sweeny, 685-2372
16 ▼ **Shouts Bar, 145 Hilcrest Dr., Reno**, Slots, Pool Tbl.
▼ **BOLD Print** 829-2653
▼ **Faces Nightclub** 270 Kingsbury Grade S.LakeTahoe
▼ **Java Jungle, 246 W. 1st St., Reno**

-They congregate in strange rooms with secretive names



-They wear "thongs".



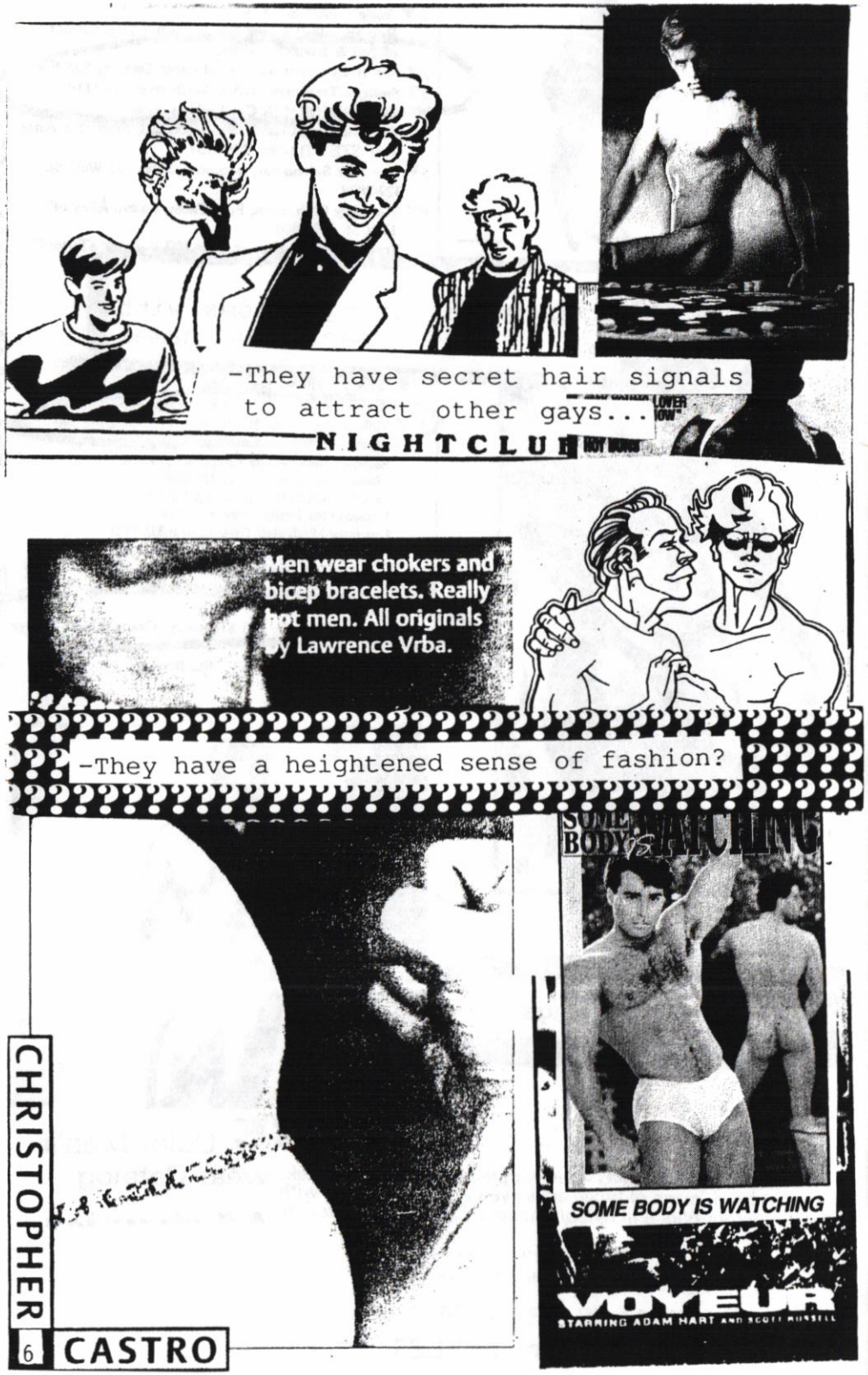
FREE Color Men's wear Catalog

B. FRINGE THONG – Just for pleasure, scant and sleek. A black mane of fringe adds eye-catching splendor with contour pouch in nylon/spandex. Body in black, red or white. **S-M-L-XL**

T020 $23 or 3/$56

C. THONG (not shown) – It's the same as **B,**

MINIMAL IS THE WORD
WITH HOT BIKINI STYLES


-They have secret hair signals to attract other gays...
NIGHTCLUB
Men wear chokers and bicep bracelets. Really hot men. All originals by Lawrence Vrba.
-They have a heightened sense of fashion?
SOME BODY IS WATCHING
VOYEUR
STARRING ADAM HART AND SCOTT RUSSELL
CHRISTOPHER
CASTRO

Homocore Chicago. POB 476953. Chicago. IL 60647. *queer punk newsletter and shows*

Homotiller. POB 460695. San Francisco. CA 94146. *music oriented queer punk zine*

Kill The Robot. POB 296. Yellow Springs. OH 45387-0296. *encyclopedia-sized queer hardcore zine*

Mafouka. POB 15828 . Philadelphia.. PA 19103. *fun personal music zine*

MRR. POB 460760. San Francisco. CA 94146. *you still have to read it - $3 latest issue*

Now I Twist Your Nipples With Spaghetti Tongs. POB 1473. Olympia WA 98507. *Josh's (Mukilteo Fairies) amazing zine - name changes every issue - send $1*

PMS. BM Box 5834. London. WC1N 3XX. England. *queer skin / music zine*

Positron. POB 477469. Chicago. IL 60647. *queer straightedge fanzine*

Punk Planet. c/o Will Dandy . Route 2. Box 438. Leeds. AL 35094. *new regular punk magazine - send $2 for latest issue*

Quart. Hampshire College. Box 1372. Amherst. MA 01002. *queer art / personal zine*

Queer. POB 2127. Sacramento. CA 95812. *personal queer punk zine*

RG Project. c/o Fundacion Aurora. c/Hortaleza 19 (1ºD). 28004 Madrid. Spain. *radical queer news zine*

Smolderhead. 3521 N. Kenwood. Kansas City. MO 64116. *rock zine produced by rad gender-bending punk*

Speed Demon. PO Box 44/A. P. zza S. Babila 4/D. 20122 Milano. Italy. *great queer music zine*

Stunt Cock. c/o Eric Tarter. 863 2nd St. Apt. B. Santa Rosa. CA 95404. *personal queer zine*

Teen Fag. c/o Chow Chow Productions. POB 20204. Seattle. WA 98102. *queer music / info zine - a great starting point*

Until All Are Free Resist. Dizzy. 72 Sarah Lane. Middletown. NY 10940. *queer punk contact newsletter*

WAD. POB 80061. Lincoln. NE 68501. **wacky personal queer punk zine.**

Other cool addresses:

Chainsaw. POB 42600. Portland. OR 97242. *cool record label with queer punk music*

Destroy All Music. 40 Windermere Ave.. Roath Park. Cardiff. UK CF2 5PR. *UK queercore label*

Gay Metal Society. POB 802784. Chicago. IL 60680. *send for newsletter - no posers*

RASH. POB 365. Canal St. Stn.. NYC. NY 10013-0365. *Red and Anarchist Skinheads - progressive and anti-racist*

"Skin". POB 234. Guildford. Surrey. GU4 7TX UK. *British gay skinhead group - non-fascist*

Turkey Baster. 6403 Johnny Morris Nº12. Austin. TX 78724. *another cool record label with queer punk stuff*

Your Postal Connection

Here is a partial listing of queer punk zines, regular punk zines, helpful queer magazines, and other organizations. I have seen them all and can personally recommend every one of them. It would be a good idea to write first, to confirm the address (say you saw it here) before sending away for anything. Oh, and nothing is free - send a stamp (at least) if you want a response.

Space limitations mean short descriptions only. For much more complete listings, check *MRR* and *Holy Titclamps* - addresses below.

Magazines:

Cross Talk. POB 944, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. *transgender magazine - excellent resource*

Diseased Pariah News, c/o Men's Support Center, POB 30564, Oakland, CA 94604. *outrageous AIDS zine that is too punk for punk - $3 sample issue*

Inside OUT. POB 460268, San Francisco, CA 94146-0268. *queer youth magazine - extremely well-done and very resourceful*

YOUTH Magazine. POB 34215, Washington, DC 20043. *another queer youth magazine - wholesome, but very worthwhile still*

Zines:

Abrupt Lane Edge. POB 2936, Loop Stn., Minneapolis, MN 55402. *informative personal queer punk zine*

Ache. c/o Starr, 1184 Treat Ave., San Francisco, CA 94110. *cool personal zine from a queer African-American perspective*

Alien Religion. *c/o* Steve W. / 1640 West Grace NºA / Richmond, VA 23220. *voice of the Lounge Singer record label - personal stuff*

Androzine. BP 192, 75623 Paris, Cedex 13, France. *long running queer anarchist/music zine*

Anonymous Boy, 321 W. 16th Street Nº2W, New York, NY 10011. *funny sex comic zine*

As Yet Untitled. c/o J. D. Alexander, POB 803012, Dallas, TX 75380. *totally personal queer zine - wow*

The Blast!, POB 7075, Minneapolis, MN 55407. *informative anarchist zine - very slick*

Comeuppance. c/o Chris Ohnesorge, POB 654, Wilton, NH 03086. *queer punk boy and his way personal zine*

Copycat, c/o Bryce, 2014 19th, Boulder, CO 80302. personal musical queer punk zine.

DV8. POB 2643, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741. *personal queer punk zine*

Fembot. POB 421912, San Francisco, CA 94142. *personal queer music fanzine send $1 - zany*

Girl Fiend, Christina, Hampshire College, Box 960, Amherst, MA 01002. *queer female personal zine*

Holy Titclamps. POB 591275, San Francisco, CA 94159-1275. *includes Queer Zine Explosion listings*

-Found at the corner of Market and Castro streets in San Francisco. Suspicious?

WALGREENS
LOTION
TRASH BAGS
LINT BRUSH
STAMPS
MINTS
BATTERY FOR JOHNNY

-Found in a bathroom in Medford, Oregon. More evidence?

BJ OUT
BACK
12:00 MID

Conclusion: these creatures are a strange breed. Their style is bizarre, but definitely unique. Not dangerous, but highly unusual. And don't worry, they're a lot more like **you** than you think...

for experienced yet discreet **gay men and women**

Introduction

There's this thing called "queercore" that's been written about here or there, which you may have heard of. I've helped a few writers with their articles. There seems to be a lot of sympathetic press out there who really want to report on new queer stuff, so it has been a fairly popular topic.

I can't tell you what it means, because I don't know, and ultimately the definition starts with you. What do you want it to be? What do you want out of life? Please don't let what you see and hear be your only defining tools. Create things that make you happy and inspire you. I will continue to do the same.

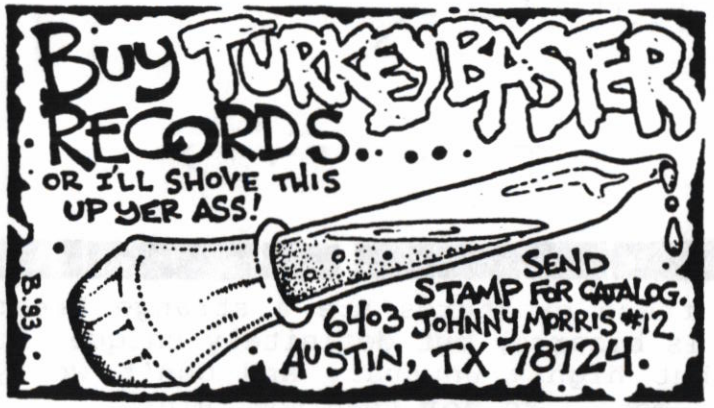
I'm thrilled to get as much attention as I have. It's helped me get in touch with lots of people I normally would have never reached. The punk network is a very good thing, but even it has its limits.

So, yes, if someone gives me a forum to express myself, I will use it. If that means using "mainstream" channels to do it, then it's all for the better. If you really believe in what you're doing, then why not? By being too cool to publicly talk about these things, we only perpetuate the silence that already exists.

Staying in the punk ghetto is too easy. Sometimes I wonder if the reason we do it is because we're too afraid of the outside world. By going public, we are exposing ourselves to criticism that we're too afraid of hearing. Perhaps there are reasons to stay underground, but I'm getting sick of screaming at a wall.

I'm not saying that we're changing the world, either. I think that the whole concept of "bringing our message to a wider audience" is not only naive, but utterly vain. As if everyone who comes in contact with these ideas is going to instantly join our way of thinking - yeah right! The truth is, people will continue to think for themselves. We can only try to expose them to our points of view.

My only other concern is that people will read about this stuff and assume that I'm the spokeperson. Hardly! I realize that I've been very vocal, but please don't think that queer punk stops with me. There are lots of people out there, with lots to say. It just means you're going to have to make an extra effort to find them.



Start your own queer punk record label!

Fashion Victims

A question from an islander: What makes white men think they can wear "thong" bikinis? I mean, when all evidence points to the contrary...

Me: People assume it's a death sentence, like you're telling them that you're about to die. That's nothing to applaud at. That's what they assume.

Paul: I don't necessarily think that people should have applauded. I don't know exactly what I expected people to do, but AIDS isn't a death sentence. It can be. It's definitely a deadly disease. Some people live for a long time, and some people die very quickly. The point is about people coming out, being open about it and trying to de-stigmatize it, and to talk about it openly. The HIV closet kills people just as much as the homo closet does. Coming out on stage is not for people to say" oh, you have AIDS - that's great" . I want people to see somebody up on stage saying,

"Look, this is what's going on. I'm not ashamed of it, it's just part of me. It's an issue in my life, something that I'm singing about and something that my band talks about. It's something that exists in the world. It's going to exist for the rest of your lives and you're gonna have to deal with it. I'm talking about it, so just think about it or whatever" .

This interview was conducted on Wed. September 20, 1994, in the Epicenter library in San Francisco. Paul is now in a new band with Owen Peery called [redacted]. You can write to them at: 477 41st St., Apt. D, Oakland, CA 94609.

Vocabulary

HIV - "human immunodeficiency virus" - the virus that is said to cause AIDS.

AIDS - medical condition that destroys to the immune system, leaving the person susceptible to many diseases.

PWA - a person with AIDS.

AZT - one of the only available medicines approved in the US to treat HIV/AIDS. It is considered by some to be toxic.

Marinol - synthetic THC, the main ingredient in marijuana. Prescribed medically to ease pain and induce hunger.

OI's - opportunistic infections that are brought on by a damaged immune system.

thrush - oral candiasis, an uncomfortable condition affecting the mouth and tongue.

pneumocystis - "PCP" type of pneumonia that is a common cause of death among PWA's.

T cells - also called CD4 cells - help the bodies immune system. HIV attacks these. A normal, healthy adult has around a thousand of these.

HIV antibody test - the test that most people take - determines if the person has been exposed to the HIV virus and if their body is producing an antibody. Hence, positive and negative.

seroconversion - a short sickness that can occur when someone's body is producing antibodies to the HIV virus

window period - the time it takes after someone has been exposed to HIV to develop the antibody, and therefore, be HIV+. It takes your body anywhere from two weeks to six months to do this. Therefore, someone can get HIV and take up to six months to show a positive test result.

Paul: You're not going to stop the spread of HIV in the queer community until homosexuality is destigmatized. If queer sexuality was accepted, it would be a huge jump in preventing HIV and AIDS.

Me: Do you know any other punks with HIV or AIDS, in the scene?

Paul: No, I don't. I know a lot of people who have it who are marginally in the scene, but no one actually. It's a pretty isolating experience. The last two shows our band played, I came out on stage, in Among The Thugs. People just stared back at me with blank faces. The reason I did that, in spite of the fact that it was somewhat risky, is that this epidemic is well into its second decade. Punk has been around for the whole decade, and has addressed the issue of AIDS very little, including the queer punk community. Off the top of my head, I can only think of a couple songs that have been written about AIDS. That's very frustrating. It's totally isolating for me. In that sense, I don't have a community. I don't know a community of punks with AIDS. I think that I'm not the only one out there.

Me: You're not. I know you're not.

Paul: But we're not very visible. I decided it was very important to come out on stage. Just to say straight up "look, this is a song about AIDS. I have AIDS". Now that Among The Thugs broke up, our new band will be much more focused on queer issues in general, and AIDS specifically. Two of us are queer in the band, me and Owen Peery , and we're going to be 2/3rds of the lyrics and vocals. We had songs in Among The Thugs that were related to queer issues, but now there will be much more of a focus. I'm very excited about that. It needs to exist, and it hasn't existed enough yet. Even in the HIV related songs that do exist - that song "The Cure" by Fugazi, from their first record - there's never been a first person song about AIDS in the punk scene. I've never seen a punk song written about the fact that they have AIDS. I think that would be a unique thing.

Me: Do you know about safe sex and do you practice it?

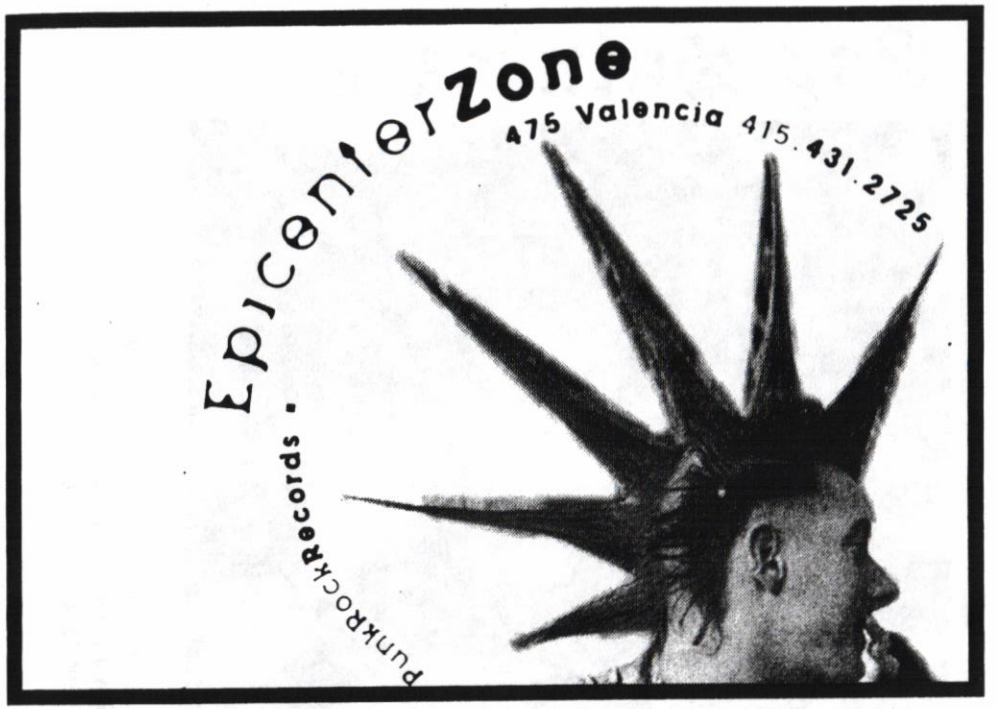
Paul: Absolutely. As often as I possibly can. I have a button on my jacket that says "I'm a Safe Sex Slut" . I got that button at the Anarchist Gathering in Toronto in 1988. I've had that button for six years. For some reason, it sticks with me.

Me: Whore.

Paul: I try. To some people, I'm the devil. I'm a non-monogamous HIV+ bisexual. To a lot of people, I'm the person who brings AIDS into the straight community, not that I've slept with a straight person in this decade. I'm promiscuous. I'm a public health concern - and that's bullshit. I am incredibly safe, and very, very responsible. I tell all my partners before I have sex with them. It's hard to do. There's all this fear of rejection and stuff like that, but it's something I do, and something that I'm really out about. I try to be out in all aspects of my life. I try to get all of that out of the way just to head that off. If we get together, they'll know before they decide even if they're interested in me or not. There is a lot of sex that is completely safe, and I'm pretty open to lots of different things. If I'm having sex with someone, we just negotiate what feels comfortable for both of us. I have a good sex life that way. I feel completely comfortable with it. I'm not spreading AIDS. My baby doesn't have it. Her mom doesn't have it. Sometimes I feel like I should walk around with little horns on my head.

Me: What kind of responses have you gotten from telling people you have AIDS?

Paul: I was wondering what people's responses would be, especially when we played at Gilman. I came out on stage as HIV+ and people just stared blankly at me. They didn't know what to say. The next thing that happened was that Owen came out as being queer and got a round of applause - and that was good that people responded really well to him saying that. But it was interesting that people were so thrown off by my having AIDS.



Outpunk - *the record label*

So much fun! A lot of work too, but it can be a blast. Of sorts. If you want to order Outpunk stuff and other related items, send a stamp for a current catalog.

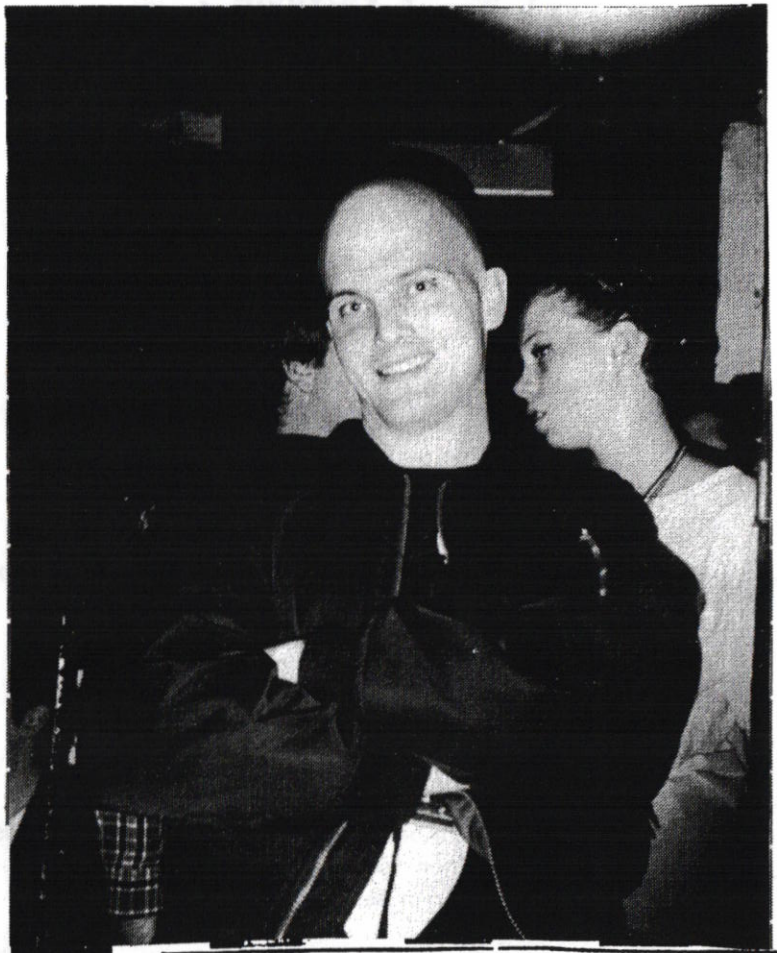
I'm not totally sure what projects I'll be doing next as of this writing. I just finished the "Outpunk Dance Party" compilation (see ad on back page) which is just wonderful and, in my opinion, a really good representation of the best in queer punk today.

I am going to release the Sister George "Drag King" LP that came out on UK Catcall Records earlier this year. It is truly a classic - you just gotta hear it! Should be out on LP and CD by late January.

I am also planning on working with my friend Iraya. She is in the process of putting together a full-length compilation of queer/female bands, tentatively called "She Fought Back". It will be a benefit for a fund that will go to the defense of Aileen Wuornos and two other women. It will have punk bands, hip hop, spoken word, and other interesting stuff, no doubt. It will be on Outpunk, although I'm not sure when the release date will be - could be a while. An incredibly inspiring idea and proof that music can be truly revolutionary.

If you order from me, please keep in mind that it is still basically a one-person operation (me) and that it takes a lot to keep up with it. Thanks to everyone who's supported me and/or given me positive feedback and comments. It's a great feeling.

Gay Skinheads



This is a photo of Bill, a gay skin from Rhode Island I met last year at the March on Washington. He said he would write me, but he never did! If you see him, tell him I said hi.

yes, PUNKS GET AIDS

worry about it". A lot of kids come here and hustle, and you can make more money if you have unsafe sex. I know a bunch of people who've gotten HIV that way. It's just a complex thing. What it means to me is that prevention efforts need to be a constantly changing, constantly re-evaluated process. You can't come up with a magic bullet or a poster that will reach everybody, every time. It's all so confusing. People get all these different messages. There are people in schools who are unwilling to talk about AIDS, unwilling to talk about homosexuality. There are people saying use condoms every time, and people saying oral sex is safe or isn't safe. It's really confusing. Even as an educator it's difficult, being fed different messages, like this is a fact, and this is a fact. It's a really troubling world to live in. It's a hard world to be a young queer person. With all the pressures, it's not like HIV is the only thing young queers have to deal with. Homophobia, violence in the family, and their schools and their friends. It just gets overwhelming for people. Sex can be an escape, and people take risks. People who are young often feel invulnerable to anything. There is this definite feeling among a lot of young people, of being immortal. Well, you know, that's someone else's disease, it's not going to happen to me, or I'm not even going to think about it. There's also the issue of "survivor guilt". People see a lot of their friends getting sick, and they're not, and they may subconsciously play out this kind of guilt thing and get themselves sick. I don't have a simple answer. What the AIDS establishment seems to be learning is that for AIDS education to work it needs to be peer-based. It's got to come out of the community that it's aimed at. For punks, the best kind of education is going to come from other punks. I think that works across the board. With infectious diseases, there's never going to be a cap on it. You're never going to eliminate it. People are going to continue to get infected. All you can do is to try to minimize that. As long as you have Congress passing laws saying that talking about homosexuality in schools is illegal, you're not going to be able to do effective education.

Me: I don't know a lot of young people who are HIV+, and that might have something to do with the people I hang out with, and the social class that I'm in. The people who I do see getting HIV come from all different backgrounds, from all different situations. Sometimes I see people who seroconvert who don't care enough about themselves, or are in situations where they just don't know how to do so. It's sad, and there is a lot of internalized homophobia.

Paul: It's not surprising, when you've got a large part of your culture telling you you're sick just because you're a homo. It's not much of a leap for people to actually get themselves sick.

year I've struggled with bureaucracies to get this stuff through. I got my MediCal card, which gives me a lot more options. So if need to see an eye doctor if I'm having problems with my vision, I can see one without waiting three months to get an appointment. I can go to any place that takes MediCal, and there's tons of places that do. It's not as good as having private insurance, but it's better than having no insurance. That's basically how I pay. Everybody in the Bay Area who's hooked up to the system who has HIV gets really good care. Basically, street people in the Bay Area with HIV get better care than rich people in Texas. All of the best researchers, all of the best doctors are practicing here. The system here is much better than New York. The HIV population there is huge but the medical situation there is completely messed up, way behind San Francisco, and the Bay Area has the best of everything. This area has the highest concentration of clinical trials of any place in the world. That kind of stuff is available to anyone who wants to look.

Me: Clinical trials are experimental medicine?

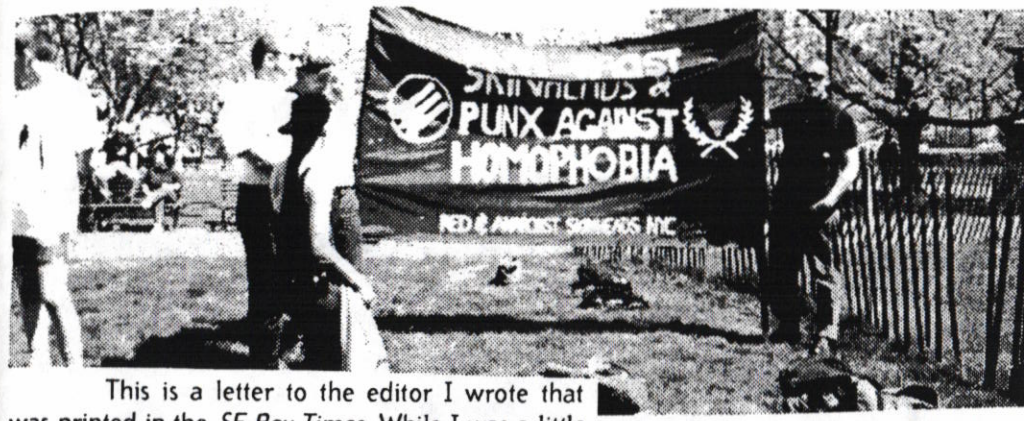
Paul: They're experimental treatments. There's a lot of research here, especially at Stanford and UCSF. For new drugs to go on the market they have to go through this long process. Several steps in that process are human trials. There's a book that gets published four times a year that's a guide to clinical trials in the Bay Area. It has all the clinical trials that are enrolling people and information on what the parameters for being in it are. Some studies pay you money and some studies don't. People can call or get their doctors to try to get them into studies. The book is like a hundred and twenty five pages, just chock full of clinical trials after clinical trials.

Me: You said before that you were an HIV educator, teaching people about HIV transmittal and safe sex.

Paul: I worked at The Berkeley Gay Men's Health Collective and I did a bunch of things there. A lot of them were focused on HIV prevention. We had a clinic and HIV testing every week. I also worked in their sexually transmitted disease clinic. As part of every appointment we talked about HIV. If someone's been at a risk to get gonorrhea they've been at risk to get HIV. We did a lot of HIV education. I've been through five or six HIV training programs.

Me: The reason I asked you that is because, you say you're 27, and I'm 23, and most of our friends are 20-something. As long as I've heard about sex education, I've always heard about safe sex, accurately or not. How do you explain, in the age of safe sex, the growing rate of HIV in young people?

Paul: We're the first generation of queers to grow up with AIDS. We never lived as out, sexual creatures before AIDS. I remember first hearing about it when I was very young. I was 13 years old in 1980. There's this epidemic that is very different than any that's existed before. There's been a ton of education that's been aimed at people. In some cases it's been really successful, and in other cases it hasn't been as successful. In the last few years they're has been an alarming increase in the rate of infection among young gay and bisexual gay men. It's really scared a lot of people because there's been a lot of education aimed at us during our teenage years. It's a very complex issue. You can say to somebody, "use a condom every time you have sex" and that makes sense. It makes sense factually: it's a good thing to use condoms. I know how to use them and I'll use them all the time. What happens in the real world is that people don't always do what's best for them or for their partners, and a lot of that has a lot to do with internalized homophobia, low self-esteem, denial. There's a lot of people our age who look at AIDS as a disease of older, middle aged gay men. Or there's the whole "he looks healthy - don't



This is a letter to the editor I wrote that was printed in the *SF Bay Times*. While I was a little miffed that it was taken out of the context of my letter (making me sound somewhat condescending), I think it's basically OK. The whole concept of labeling skinheads as "the racists" is just too simple. Aside from the fact that it's not completely true, it provides the real white racists (the average white American) a chance to avoid dealing with their own attitudes. They draw the attention away from themselves and scapegoat something else that they know little, if anything, about.

For info on progressive, anti-racist skinheads, write RASH (Red and Anarchist Skinheads), POB 365, Canal St. Stn., NYC, NY 10013-0365.

(see also the zine listings in this issue for more items)

Queer Punks Are Anti-Racist

Just a quick note in regards to Thom Bean's column in the *SF Bay Times*, July 15:

Thom mentioned "gay skinheads" in the last paragraph of his piece, in the context of racist groups within the gay community. While I am certainly not about to argue with his observations on gay racism, please do not stereotype gay skinheads!

I am not a skinhead, but being a young queer punk rocker I have known many skinheads in my time. The fact is a majority of skinheads are *anti-racist*. Unfortunately, the idiots who have adopted the look and identity give the movement a bad name.

I realize that it's hard for the public to tell the difference among skins, but it's annoying to see people generalize about a group of people more intelligent than you think. I have several gay skinhead friends who no doubt cringe when they read stereotypes in the media such as the one Thom Bean wrote.

Matt Wobensmith
San Francisco

PANSY DIVISION

on tour with Green Day

We didn't know Green Day personally when they asked us to open a 4 week tour for them from July 8 through August 2, 1994. It was to be their last tour of "smaller" halls (under 2000 capacity) before Lollapalooza, before they went platinum. We gladly accepted.

Their drummer Tré told me that one reason they wanted us was to irritate and freak out the meathead / intolerant element of their newly-acquired mainstream audience. They are very pro-queer (though not queer themselves), and they relished the idea of foisting us upon an unsuspecting crowd. We were up for the challenge, though not without trepidation: we had fears of being hated, booed, and pelted. However, nothing like this happened. After playing a few shows on our own, we met up with Green Day in Canada...

7/8/94 Calgary, Alberta

The first show turned out to be the worst show in terms of audience reaction. Of the 900 people attending, nearly 2/3 fled to the lobby or outdoors during our set. Strangely, no other mass exodus of this sort occurred the rest of the tour. A surly looking guy stood right in front of me, looking mean and making me uncomfortable, but when we played "Bunnies" near the end of our set, he knew the words and sang along. That made me feel better, but we still thought the tour might be tough...

vitamins in their system. It supplements them, so you end up putting more in than if you weren't sick. Certain vitamins help your immune system, and certain vitamins help protect against certain kinds of infections. It's the same thing with herbs. I try to use vitamins and herbs rather than regular medicine, but I also use medicine when I need to. I have chronic sinus infections, which I've never had before, so I do take regular medicine, and it works. That's been my approach - to use both traditional Western medicine and traditional non-Western forms of medicine. That's one of the good things about living here. There's no good place to have HIV obviously, but it's certainly the best place around to be HIV+ because all the resources that exist around the world are here. There's tons and tons of information available, tons of resources, tons of different perspectives that you can read and read and read and read. Through that ongoing process I've settled on this pattern of taking herbs and vitamins.

Paul Dalton and 19 month old daughter.

Me: How do you pay for doctors and medicine?

Paul: It's just changed recently. Before last month I was what's called a "medically indigent adult", meaning that I didn't have any health insurance or money to pay for health insurance. What happens is the county, in my case Alameda county picks up the bill - CMSP - County Medical Service Provider - whatever. Basically I had to go to Highland Hospital for my care, which I still go to, and I had to get all my medicine from the pharmacy there. I just got approved for Social Security Disability, and as part of that you get MediCal. So now I have health insurance. I continue to go to Highland because my doctor at Highland I like a lot. I knew her before I was her patient. I've known her for a while and we're pretty good friends. I can continue to got there, and I can also get my medicine at Castro Village Pharmacy or any place that takes MediCal. Highland pharmacy is a nightmare. It takes two or three hours to get medicine. It was really hard to get on MediCal. It took me almost a year, from November of last year when I first applied for disability, and it just got approved in August. We're talking a good three quarters of a

lot of attention to me. Also, it was getting really close to the time when my daughter was being born. My friend had wanted to get pregnant that spring and I helped her get pregnant. I had been tested at that point and I was negative. She had continually gotten tested whole she was pregnant and she was still negative, although there was still some vague concern, but she was fine. So my whole life was basically turning upside down. I was within a month or so of becoming a father and then finding out I had HIV at the same time. It was pretty crazy. For awhile I did fine. It was just so unreal I couldn't figure out what it all meant. After awhile it all started to sink in and it was really hard. That whole spring after that was really hard. I got very depressed and started fighting with Kim, my daughter's mother, and we had never fought before. All this stuff just came about because basically I just didn't know which way was up. I was in emotional vertigo. My whole life was changed too quickly to even get a grip on it. Then things settled down. I was able to get my bearings about what I was going to do with my life, and what was going on. Accept it and deal with it, whatever.

Me: So, how did your perception of life change at that point?

Paul: It sounds trite to say this, but it gave me a sense of purpose. It gave me a real clear context about how the rest of my life was gonna play out. It's forced me to deal with issues of mortality and sickness, and it's not like I haven't dealt with that stuff before. I have a lot of friends who have been sick, a lot of friends who have died, and a lot of friends who have been living with HIV for a long time. But it's a real different thing being on the other side of that imaginary line. Even though I had thought about it a lot, and been on one side of it - being on the other side was a really different thing. It's given me a totally different outlook. It's changed everything. It makes me look at everything differently. It makes me look at my relationships differently. It makes me look at my health differently. It makes me much more present in the moment. Living for today and trying to make today work for me. It's not any better or worse - it's just different. It kind of feels like my middle age was ripped away from me. I had my youth, and I'm kind of in this period that's almost like old age. I'm on disability - I don't have to work anymore, so I'm basically retired. I'm having to deal with my health on a day-to-day basis. Most people who are twenty-seven don't have to do that. I take about sixty pills a day, between medicine and herbs and vitamins. I take handfuls and handfuls of medicine. I have to laugh sometimes - I'm here eating my breakfast in the morning and taking all these pills, just like my grandmother. Every time we'd go over to her house and have breakfast she'd have all these pills and vitamins every morning, and now I'm doing it and I'm 27 years old. It's just changed things.

Me: So, explain your AIDS diagnosis.

Paul: The average healthy adult has about a thousand T-cells. If they go below 200 you can become susceptible to "OI's", or opportunistic infections. My T-cells have gone under 200, but I haven't had any opportunistic infections. I've had some symptoms, but I haven't had PCP or thrush or anything like that. It's really important to keep weight on. One of the things that happens when someone gets sick is that they can lose a lot of weight really fast. It's very important for people with HIV to keep on as much weight as they can, to actually have more weight on their body than they would naturally. It's sort of a buffer zone. I've been really skinny all my life. I've never been somebody who ate a lot of food, so having that Marinol, that prescription, helps me eat a lot. Other than that I've taken different medicines at different times, but mostly what I take is a lot of herbs and vitamins. The vitamins are because a lot of people with HIV have low levels of

7/11/94 Winnipeg, Manitoba

We went to Edmonton, where we were much better received. The following night in Regina, the crowd was nearly dead quiet between songs (the more apathetic shows were like that), although we did well selling merchandise. Winnipeg (the only show out of 19 not to sell out) provided our best Canadian response, as well as the most hecklers. They gave us the finger (the most common response) and yelled shit at us. I could see the culprits, and one of them was so fucking cute it almost made me cry. But the were witless dopes, and gave us some perfect set-ups, like "you suck!". Our response? "Of course we suck - that's the point, asshole.". It took them 20 minutes to come back with "you suck shit", but we were walking offstage by then.

7/14/94 Omaha, Nebraska

After a non-Green Day stop in Minneapolis, we played to a fairly redneck crowd in the lounge of a bowling alley (free bowling for band members!). Tonight the girls loved us (a trend that would continue); one of them loaned Chris her handcuffs for "James Bondage". Before the show, someone spotted a guy wearing pants with "White Power" written on them in big letters. All three members of Green Day approached him and told him they hated his pants and didn't want that shit at their shows. Bassist Mike was beet red talking to the guy, who replied "it didn't mean anything". They told him it'd better not, and pointed him out to security, just in case. Cool.

As for Green Day themselves, we got along great. They were very nice, their crew was very nice, and helped us out a lot. We got to play a 45 minute set every night, and they shared their food and drinks with us. They completely lacked rock star arrogance and were very supportive; we couldn't have asked for a better situation. As for their performances, they played pretty much the same set every night, mostly the new album, but a fair bit of "Kerplunk". They goofed around a hell of a lot on stage, which is a bit tedious after you've seen them do it a few times, but they played for a long time and gave fans their $10 worth.

During our set, Tré (who had bright green hair filled with barrettes) wandered out into the crowd. He asked a guy for a light, and the guy acted really uptight, like he was hitting on him. In his usual subtle way, Tré declared, "I'm not trying to hit on you. I just needed a light. And you're not that cute anyway". Pansy Division - feel the tension rise among the insecure guys!

7/16/94 St. Louis, Missouri

After Lawrence, Kansas (supportive but subdued college crowd) we played St. Louis, the first show that went really great. People knew the lyrics, some were there to see us, and there was actually mosh pit action down front. (Green Day's sets were non-stop frenzies of pit action). Tonight I noticed just one guy flipping us off - he was in the back, giving us the finger with both hands. He decided he had to get up front to communicate his disapproval. So he waded through the crowd and wandered right into our most enthusiastic fans, who chastised him with subtle kicks and elbows, and shut him the fuck up. Yesss! In general, having visible support tended to neutralize the bullies and potentially violent creeps; if they sense they can't rally the crowd to their bad vibe, it defuses them. This heartening trend continued the rest of the tour.

7/ 20/ 94 Appleton, Wisconsin

After a good reception in Madison, we headed two hours north to Appleton, a town we'd been warned about as being full of rednecks, Aryan types, as well as the

hometown of witch-hunt Senator Joseph McCarthy (there's a fuckin' statue of him there). The club has a total of one phone, a pay phone. I had to make a call, but it kept ringing, so I answered it. I talked to a mom worried that Green Day's lyrics might corrupt her teenage daughter, who was attending. "Oh, they're safe". I promised, knowing full well OUR lyrics would give her a heart attack. The call added to my concerns about the area.

But the crowd was very supportive; sometimes the towns most repressed react best. We signed lots of autographs and sold tons of CD's and shirts. And there was a boy, 15 maybe, the most adorable teenage boy in the world, who came up afterwards and gave us hugs and thanked us for playing his town. At the end of the tour, we agreed that Appleton had the cutest boys of any city we played - go figure!

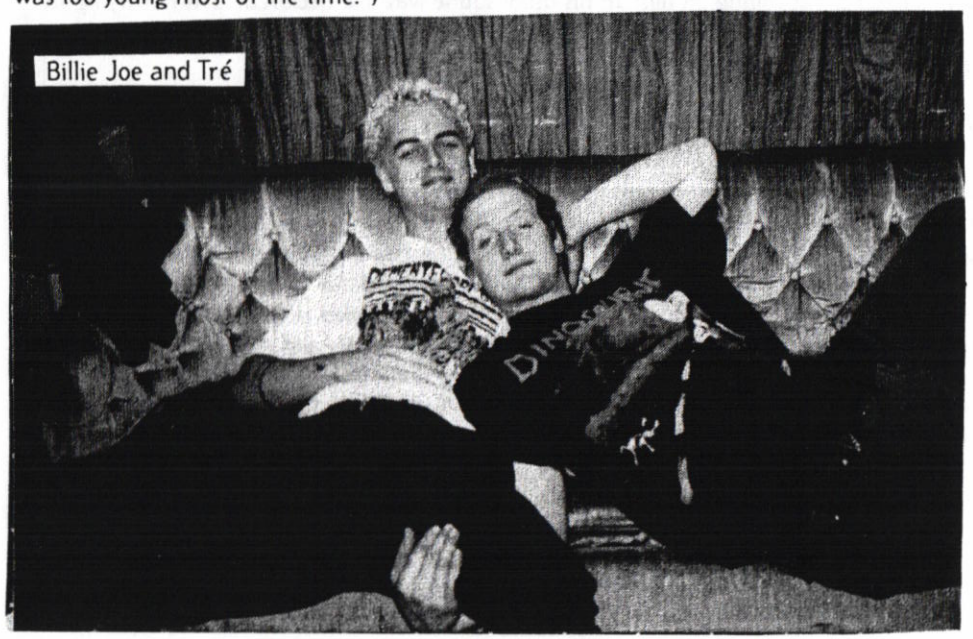
A fan told us he'd overheard a good example of uptight straightness: a guy nervously remarked to his buddy, "if they drop trou, I'm outta here".

7/ 23/ 94 Cleveland, Ohio

After a non-Green Day date in Chicago, and a large but quiet crowd in Milwaukee, we did an afternoon outdoor show. It was an all-day free show sponsored by the local dinosaur rock station, and Green Day headlined. But they were on at 9, and we were on at 2, playing to a few hundred people. A few dozen people were there for us, and really into it. But one guy, the kind of guy who turns up for these free shows, was having none of it. He nastily berated us and the supportive audience members; Chris and I just blew him kisses, which the crowd cheered. But he tried to get backstage, and then caught up with Chris walking through the parking lot, intent on bashing him (security intervened). Our only near-violent episode. The guy was a musclehead with a ripped flannel shirt. Grunge-brain!

Later, Green Day were prevented from playing - 10,000 people converged on a 4,000 seat place and were breaking down fences trying to get in. To avoid a potential riot, cops shut it down.

Oh, and I got laid, only time on the Green Day part of the tour. (The crowd was too young most of the time.)



Billie Joe and Tré

HIV Positive Punks

The first part in a series that does not end here.

So you think that AIDS is someone else's disease and you don't think it's your problem. You maybe think that you CAN'T get HIV because you know better. You didn't even consider that the last beautiful, attractive, sexy person you had sex with could have given you something that could kill you. Well, I'm here to prove you wrong.

Kids get AIDS. Punks get AIDS. It's not fiction.

Me: So, who are you?

Paul: My name is Paul Dalton. I'm a 27 year old bisexual punk. I grew up in upstate New York, and I've been out here in California for about four years.

Me: When did you first learn you were HIV+?

Paul: I found out first in November of 1992. It was a routine HIV test. I was getting tested regularly every six months at least prior to that. One time I went in, and it was convoluted because I got an indeterminate test. Without getting into the specifics, it was inconclusive - they couldn't say if it was positive or negative. I was an HIV educator and I knew that it meant it was almost definitely positive. There are some cases where those tests turn out negative, but not usually - usually it's positive. But I didn't know for sure - I didn't have a positive result. I was sort of in a no man's land between positive and negative. I didn't know what to do about it, so I didn't do anything about it. I didn't talk to anybody about it. I didn't really think about it. I just went into pretty complete denial. I got really drunk a few weeks later when I was in Atlanta and blurted out a bunch of stuff to all these people. There were people there who knew people from here in California so I sort of forced my own hand. When I came back from Atlanta I called all my friends, I called my parents; I told everybody. Within another month I got some more tests that came back conclusively positive.

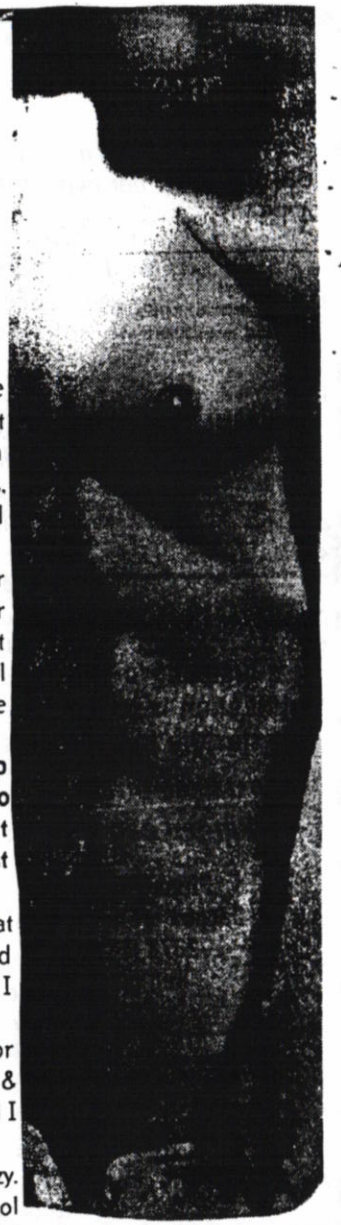
Me: Did you have any inclination, prior to that, that you might be positive?

Paul: Not really. It was always within the realm of possibility, but I didn't have any specific inklings this time that it was going to be positive. I hadn't been sick. I hadn't had what was called "seroconversion" - when people get sick when they're first infected. I remember getting that between my first and second tests. I remember getting really sick. So I really didn't suspect it. I was pretty blown away. I was an HIV test counselor, and this woman gave me my results and I was a terrible client. I wouldn't talk to her, and she wanted to engage me, and finally I was like "look - I know all the tricks you're gonna try - I do the same job as you do. It's not going to work" and I just left.

Me: So, following that, did you get depressed about it?

Paul: Yeah, at first. At first it seemed unreal, total denial. And then when I did come out to some friends and family, everyone was incredibly supportive, very loving. People were very concerned about me. For a while I was surrounded by people who were paying a

Destroying the Myth of Community



I feel like I'm forever hiding. I'm making a lifestyle out of hiding from the inevitable. I don't want to see. I don't want to know. The entire gay community looks down from their condos. their gay cruise ships. their Palm Springs resorts. their posh restaurants. their make-believe worlds. I wish I had the money to buy my freedom. but I don't. Yet.

And the whole time the rest of you have to fend for yourselves. Ha. I've made it this far - can you? Can you hear me taunting you from my sanctuary? Ha ha ha. I've got everything and you've got NOTHING. I have more than I'll ever appreciate and you're just dying for a crumb. just a taste of something that I stopped caring about years ago.

We are dying to fit in. We will give up everything. We will give up our lives just to belong. WE ARE DESPERATE. **We want what everyone wants. Just a little peace and quiet. Just a little compassion.**

Kids get AIDS. Not because they don't know what a condom is. But because they are so desperate to be wanted that they sacrifice everything just to have and be held. Do I have to give up me to be loved by you? I'm afraid so.

I'm disgusted at the lack of concern we have for each other. I can't compete in a world of expensive clothes & washboard stomachs. I'm fat. I'm poor. and I'm insecure. And I didn't even get a t-shirt.

I don't know what I'm getting at but I'm going crazy. I'm getting more and more upset every day. I can't control myself any longer. Sorry to be such a bummer but the world isn't a pretty place. Hate to break it to you.

RESULTS !!!

Spend 10 days aboard the luxurious ***Cunard Sea Goddess I.*** Enjoy stuffed lobster and French Champagne or a quiet moon lit stroll. Work out in the gym or curl up with a good book. The best part is you are also helping our community.

7/ 25/ 94 Cincinnati, Ohio

After an enthusiastic show in Indianapolis. we had my favorite show of the tour. We played well. had a ton of people singing along and whooping it up. had a great time talking to people afterwards. and had lots of underwear thrown at us! During "Denny". our most serious song. a black lace bra landed at my feet. It was the most incongruous moment. and I could not stop laughing. It was great going over so well in such a conservative city. (Cincinnati's nickname is "The Queen City". tee hee).

7/ 28/ 94 Pittsburgh, PA

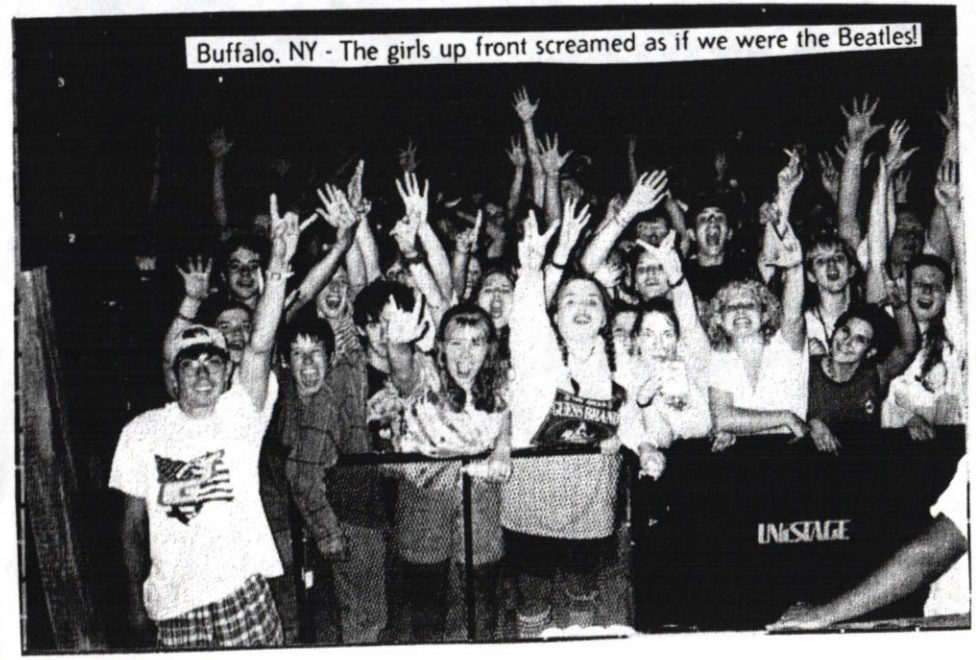
After Grand Rapids. Michigan (a town full of churches and bible colleges - we played in a mall) and Detroit (sans Green Day). we landed in beautiful but dull Pittsburgh. Two fans told me they'd found out about the (sold out) show the day before and paid scalpers $40 to see us! Thank god they liked us! That someone would pay that much to see us blows my mind.

Before playing. Chris spotted a guy wearing a shirt with the Trix rabbit on it. saying "Silly faggot - Dix are for Chix". Chris cited this stupid example of homophobia onstage prior to our first song. comparing it to blatantly racist and sexist shit. So the atmosphere was kinda tense. but we played on. and one of the club's sound crew. a tall black guy with dreads. told us it was "the most punk thing I've ever seen. You guys are punk as fuck. Congratulations. " and gave us hugs. Cool!

Oh. and Chris later spotted the "Chix/Dix" shirt guy - we'd shamed him into putting on another shirt over it. a Bad Religion shirt. Chris confronted the guy. and he apologized. A show he won't forget.

7/ 29/ 94 Buffalo, NY

One of the coolest things about the tour was how young our audiences were: it was like doing queer outreach to teenagers. Another cool thing was how many girls really liked us. Our approach is unique. and they're not as threatened at all. and think it's a scream. And tonight they screamed at every move!



Buffalo, NY - The girls up front screamed as if we were the Beatles!

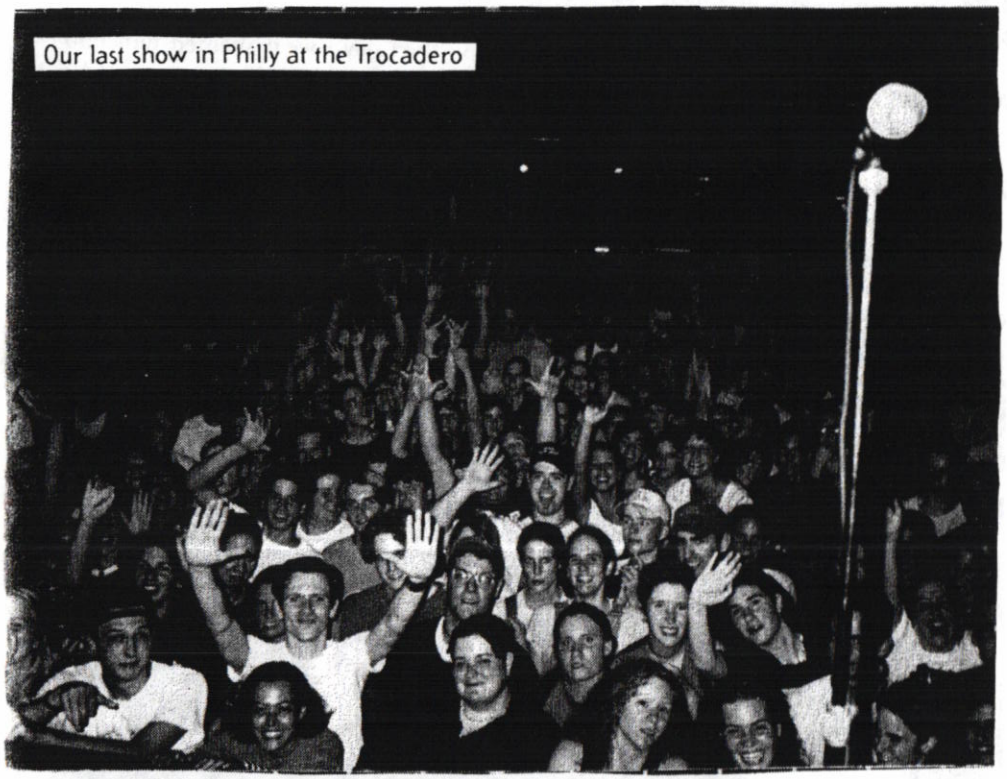
"Silly Faggot - Dix are for Chix !!"

7/ 30/ 94 Allentown, PA

Ugh - the club was a heavy metal joint called Starz, and we weren't even advertised as being on the bill. About 3 people (out of 1600) knew who we were. The crowd didn't boo or throw things, but the bad vibes were palpable. The guy who ran the monitors LOVED us (he saw us again in Philadelphia the following week) but the sound man HATED us, first turning down the vocals, then abandoning the soundboard, leaving Green Day's soundman, Randy, to mix us. Still, even on a night like this we managed to sell some shirts and CD's, and even met a girl who told us how tough it was being bisexual in Allentown. I'll bet!

8/2/92 Philadelphia, PA

After a gig near Hartford, Connecticut, where we played in a club adjacent to a strip joint (which the backstage had access to through as hidden entrance - yuck!), this was our last show with Green Day. It was a good show but a sad parting, a good experience. Overall, we played to well over 20,000 people on this tour. Wow.



Our last show in Philly at the Trocadero

I took a photo of the crowd tonight. It shows hundreds of people smiling, cheering, waving, giving us the rock 'n' roll sign, and then, in the back, about five guys giving us the finger. That photo is a good microcosm of how the tour went. I'd do it again.

end.

5. Have you ever fucked a rock star? If yes, who?

Ellyot - I have never fucked a rock star. I always have to be the most famous girl in bed.

Lisa - Nah. I'm partial to and have more in common with bag ladies and that ever so lovable but twisted Chuckie from the movie "Child's Play". Film star qualities indeed.

Lindon - Yes. Michael Jackson when I was seven.

Daryl - No I have not fucked any rock stars and I do not intend to fuck any friggin' rock stars...well, maybe just one.

6. Do you belong to a "queercore scene"?

Ellyot - I belong to a queercore scene and I have a membership card to prove it.

Lisa - Yes. Mainly as yet, based around the East End (of London) kray twin style. But it's growing with more bands, zines, etc. Here, queercore came explicitly from "Riot Grrl;" and not the other way round - which is telling. That's why it is more mixed and not so knobby. Basically it's just your usual collection of unsociable misfits with a serious attitude problem, who hate the gay scene and are bored with the fey cute indie "alternative". Here, it's more of a class thing. You could equally call it "dole-core". We don't survive on the promise of a parental grant, just on giros (state benefits) and our sense of rock 'n' roll greatness.

Lindon - In Britain, queercore isn't so much of a scene as an epidemic of nasty little upstarts who have learnt not to have to say yes and still have a fucking good time.There is no ready-made ghetto for us in Britain without the cash. We live among crap. We don't want to plaster over cracks in our lives or seal ourselves in a community bubble. We want to explode all the shit and the limp excuses. It's not about building bridges or blowing them up. It's about fighting back on all fronts.

We say queercore is an attitude problem. But we don't wear it on our shiny leather trousers or our quaint gay heritage. We don't wear it on our fluffy pink cheeks; or our cosy cat complements. We don't wear it in our Kalvin Klein Knickers and our safe community crutches. Not in our PC masks.

We don't wear it in our stagnant lazy lifestylism. We don't wear it in our numb & stoned hatred of life, or our stinking popper prejudices.

Queercore - fucking anger for life. An attitude rebellion to all things rotten and routine. Queercore is as anti-gay as it is anti-straight. Homophobia is the fear and loathing of monotony. Queercore says stand proud of your homophobia. Kick all life's bewildered buffoons in the teeth, fuck their sexuality.

7. Future plans?

Ellyott - I want to be as big as the Carpenters.

write Sister George:
c/o Ellyot Dragon / 26 Crescent Rd. / London E13 OLT UN / UK

SISTER GEORGE

1. Who are you?

Ellyott (vocal/guitar) - "I am Ellyott Dragon". Lisa (bass). Lindon (guitar/vocal). Daryl (drums) - "My name is D.A.R.Y.L. - Data Analising Robot Youth Lifeform".

2. Why did you start this band?

Lisa - Cos Someone else was bound to and I wanted to do it first. It takes trashy malcontents and trouble mouths, anyone else would have been a shame up.

Lindon - We started the band because of Riot Grrl and the fact that there didn't seem to be any British queer bands doing anything interesting. I guess we thought 'why the fuck can't we do it then'. Instead of sitting around moaning at the straightness (or the gayness) of it all. The racism, sexism and exclusivity of the gay scene (plus the crap music) means a lot of queer kids prefer to socialise around music scenes that are gonna be generally straight. we wanted to be part of building something to challenge that.

3. Describe yourselves and/or your music.

Ellyot - I am a moany loud mouth 5 ft. oversized egoed brat.

Lindon - Angry alive and just want to rock.

4. Biggest pet peeves and/or hang-ups?

Ellyot - "pink pound", most dykes, those that make a fetish out of Emperor's New Clothes, gay lifestyle / any lifestylism, the word "nice", leather - it's irredeemably naff sexless and states the obvious, liberals - people ask if we're concerned about straight appropriation. Not really. I'm more concerned with liberal appropriation, those that make a career of forever missing the point (regardless of sexuality) who, with their rainbow coloured over-enthusiasm, kill with kindness and limp understanding.

Lindon - "Fawning liberals", empty airheads who flow through life without having to stop and think, sickly little "indie" wretches who shop in the right places

Daryl - The boring same, week in week out, indie scene, full of stupid grunge loving knobheads with their long greasy hair or their new age dreadlocks. The way the indie scene is male and white dominated - being black this annoys me a great deal. When I am at a gig and I'll be one of the three black people that were there, or the only one...

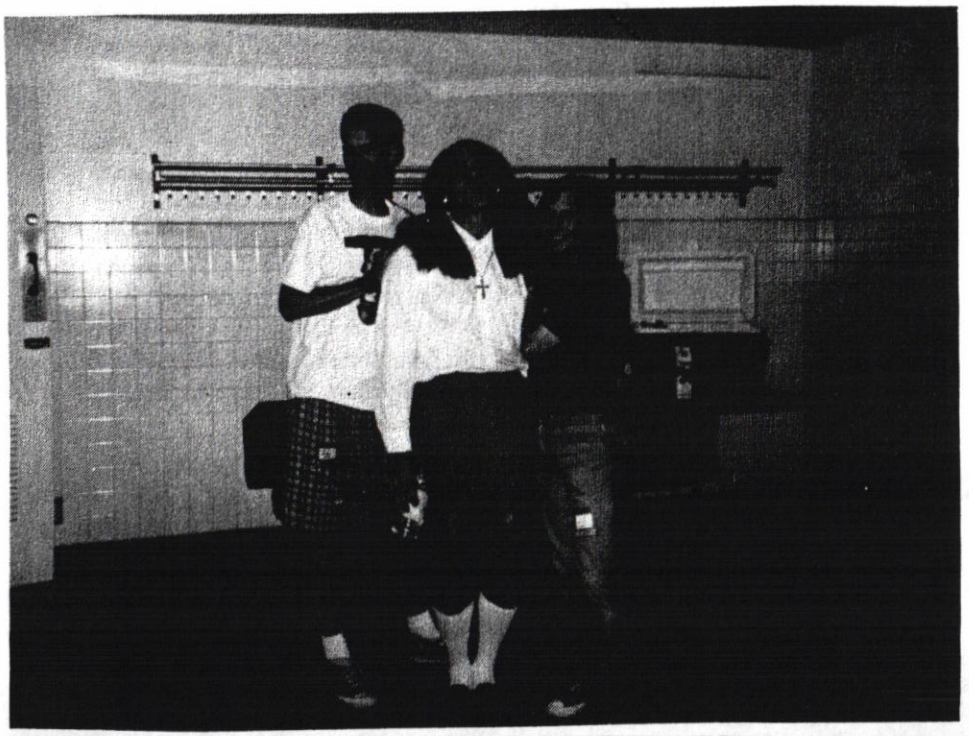
Also probably more than the indie scene, the gay scene in this country, particularly "Old Compton St.". White, middle class racist sexist fucking wankers. Compton St. is a street where nearly every place in the street is a gay venue. You may think this is good, a street where gay people can walk down the street hand in hand, or kiss. But the fact is, Compton St. is a street where things are very expensive, so it draws a crowd who can afford these things. If you're working class with not much money, you can't afford these things. The venues are fucking sexist - racist. Gay men call women "fish" and they feel that they are invading their places. If you're black you feel exempt from it, and the only time white people wanna know you is because they have stereotypical views of what a black person should be like.

If you're young and coming out it doesn't offer you anything. Where do you go? That's why it's good to have a queercore scene. It offers an alternative to a scene that offers nothing but coffee table boringness and golden cropped hair boys.

Just because you're gay don't make you OK.

Queer Punk Bands Invade Your Town !

I was hoping to make this zine somewhat current, although by the time it reaches print, it'll be old news, I'm sure. Let's have a big round of applause for Pansy Division and Tribe 8, "homocore's leading lights", for their successful and courageous tours. You just read about Pansy Division's latest, although the big news is that they are touring again with Green Day, only now the crowds are 10,000 plus a night and the end of their tour is at friggin' Madison Square Garden! History is being made, folks. If they can do it, maybe your band can, too. I got the awesome privilege to accompany the Pansies on their most recent leg of their big tour through southern California, and boy was it wild! Gigantic crowds (this is "arena rock", folks), deli trays, backstage shmoozing, and a pack of teenage girls who tried to mug me for my backstage pass - who would've ever thought it? All politics aside, Green Day were really cool folks, who seem to have their shit together, and plan to keep Pansy Division at their sides for quite some time. The crowds just loved them! Aside from the hundreds of middle fingers and "fuck you faggot's", they pretty much showed the kids who the real punks were.

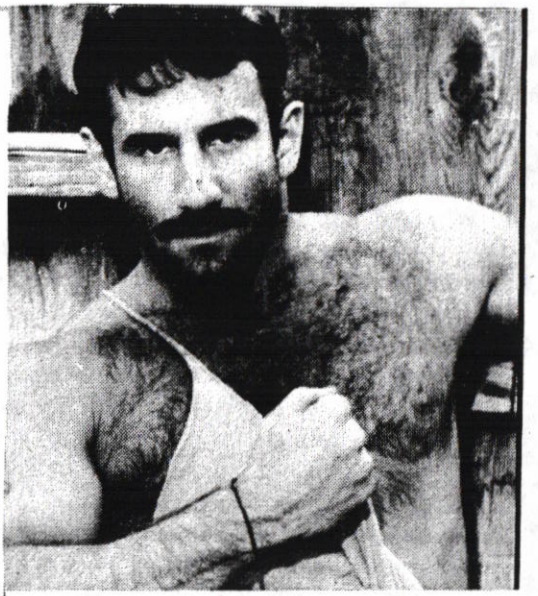


Pansy Division backstage in the San Diego Sports Coliseum before their show on Halloween night.

And on related items, Tribe 8 had an unprecedented chance to play the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival this summer. The women-only festival has a reputation for being, um, wholesome, and the fact that they would allow this group of self-described "blade-brandishing, gang-castrating, dildo-swinging, bullshit-detecting, aurally pornographic, Neanderthal pervert"s to play to the 7,000 women on their main stage is an incredibly bold step in the right direction. The crowd was treated to Tribe 8's wild set, complete with several mosh pits, marked off with haybales into different sections for physically- and aurally-challenged slam dancers. Of course, an event like this doesn't go without fanfare, as there were several visible protesters to Tribe 8's outrageous agenda (see photo). The band hosted discussion sessions that lasted for hours, where young pre-teens and gray-haired old school feminists shared their thoughts. All in all, it was a very positive experience, no doubt a landmark in time. Read about it in the November issue of *Ms.* magazine. The revolution will not be televised, nor will you read about it in *Maximum RocknRoll*.

Tribe 8 has a new album coming out on Alternative Tentacles in late January called "Fist City". Wow. In the past, I have mistakenly printed the wrong address for them. If you need to write them, please do so at : Tribe 8, 420 14th St. №8, San Francisco, CA 94103.

FAGBASH



1. Who are you?

Pearl Jam, Paul, 24 Scorpio / Jym, 26, Libra / Dave, Moonchild.

2. Why did you start this band?

To confuse the gay community completely and to hang out with cool girls.

3. Describe yourselves and/or your music.

We are club damaged, drug damaged, art damaged, East Coast damaged, love damaged, and beautiful. Our music is Warholian grunge smoothed out on the R&B tip.

4. Biggest pet peeves or hang-ups?

San Francisco, anarchists, the Club Fiend after party, mod-prims, hot older men in their 30's with younger boyfriends, whack DJ's, nutrition.

5. Have you ever fucked a rock star? If yes, who?

Each other.

6. Do you belong to a "queercore scene"?

We used to - now we belong to the "bi-core scene". Other queers hate us because they know we're better than them! Punk sucks.

7. Well, what do you like?

Things we love: TITS, Adult Entertainment, Chico, Jerome and Jessie, gay cops, the speed freak that actually lives at the End-Up, Heather Locklear and MP, shopping in the Castro, fashion, Collingwood Park, the Lone Star, Maverick Records.

8. Any hobbies you'd like to share with us?

Music, anonymity, shopping in the Castro, cosmopolitan slumming and looking great at a low cost.

9. What's your biggest regret right now?

We'd like to be more political but we're so involved with the show - ever leaving our mother's pussies.

10. Future plans?

Simple - WORLD DOMINATION.

The nation's gay business magazine.

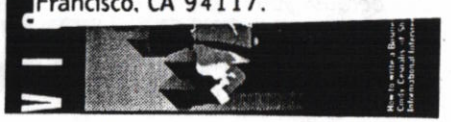
Every day, more gay people are leaving large corporations to venture out on their own. Each month we take you into their lives. We show you the strategies they've used to accomplish their goals. Practical business research. Information technology. Popular book reviews. Professional getaways. Proven techniques, national business calendars and more! Knowledge is power: In 1992 our community pumped $514 billion into the nation's economy. Be a part of this historic shift in the way America does business! *Victory!* is yours! **Subscribe today!**

NAME

COMPANY

STREET ADDRESS

Victory!



to save
37% o...
ysstand
rical 12 monthly issues

Fagbash has several self-released cassettes available, plus a cut on a 7" compilation. Write to them at: 1689 Fulton, San Francisco, CA 94117.

1. Who are you?

Tetley, Dudley Manlove, Aloofah, and Professor Swish.

2. Why did you start this band?

We met at a "Shocking Grey" seminar - "How to start your own Queer business". They said dance/industrial was a good investment.

3. Describe yourselves and/or your music.

Music/life: patheticore/shambolic (feel the hesitance).

4. Biggest pet peeves or hang-ups?

Militarism, the cockatiel hairdon't, queer consumerism, Maximum R&R boys-club-for-men (and their lousy nail polish!). Waif look, scenes and the people who love them.

5. Have you ever fucked a rock star? If yes, who?

Our wish list for 1994: Yoko Ono, Gary Numan, Thalia Zedek, Tae Won Yu, Lene Lovich, Chris Xefos, Barbara Manning, Fang (Paul Revere and the Raiders), Pete Townshend, Jane Weidlin, Josie & the Pussycats, Ann Magnuson, Moulty, Boss, Josephine Wiggs, Rancid.

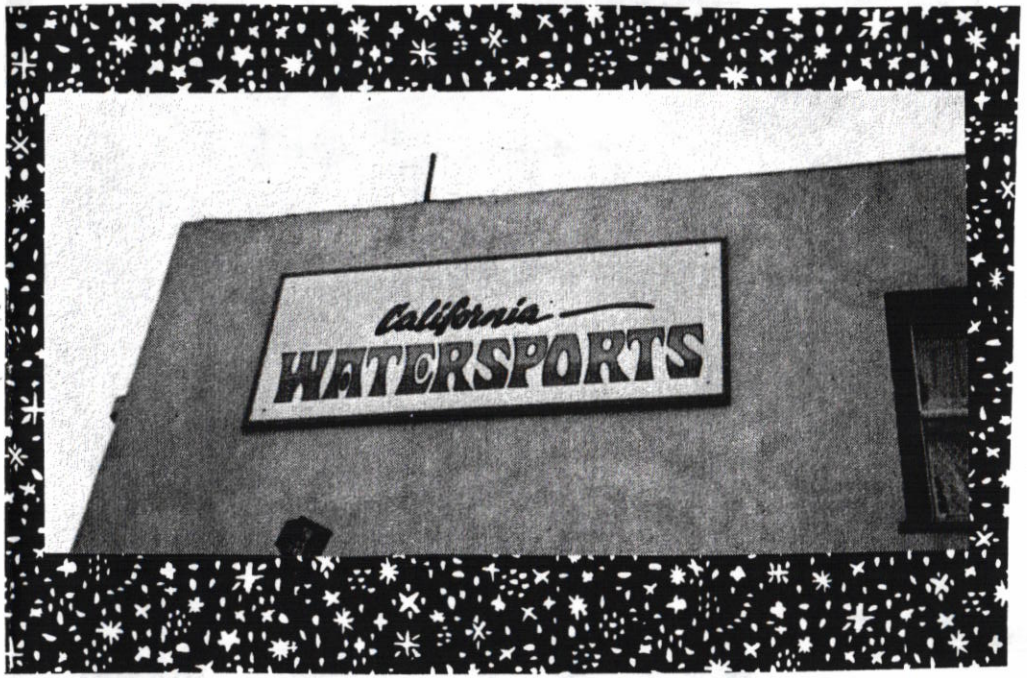
6. Do you belong to a "queercore scene"?

Maybe.

7. Future plans?

Charting my cycle, reading The Hobbit, catering to the bourgeoisie while maintaining our DIY ideals, 7" on Lounge Singer records, drinking a chilled beverage, having color analysis (badly needed), making my room tidy, changing the tampons, activist boutique in conjunction with New College.

The original 6'6" Black godessa...
Vaginal Davis and Robespierre
New 7" Record OUT NOW!
Vaginal Davis and Robespierre
3 song, 7" EP
$3.50 Check/M.O. to M. Freitas (or $3 cash + a 29 cent stamp)
North America: $4. World: $5
spectra-sonic records, POB 477868, Chicago, IL 60647



Cool Beans! Zine and BBS
3181 Mission #113, SF, CA 94110

#1 interviews with Helmet, Sebadoh, Jesus Lizard, Aaron Cometbus, reviews, coffee stains, etc. Back in print $2.00 ppd.

#2 interviews with Jon Spencer, Swirlies, Seam, Food, Bob Mould, Head injury stories, reviews and lots of cool stuff. Back in print $2.00 ppd.

#3 interviews with Free Kitten, Greta Shred(Mudflap) Hair and Skin Trading Company, Frank Black, Lewis Largent, Dis-, and has a 3 track 7" included with songs by Lou Barlow, Dis- $4.00 ppd

WELL CONCEALED CASH ONLY!!

Cool Beans! BBS 415-648-PUNK
(coming soon: e-mail and usenet)

oom.

DOUBLE ZERO

1. Who are you?

Leah Huddleston - bass
Jill Reiter - guitar, vocals
Laura Cromwell - drums

2. Why did you start this band?

To fuck rock stars.

3. Describe yourselves and/or your music.

Ourselves - 3 grrrls and various guest stars including: Melissa / Sugarshock, Stephanie / Shrieking Violets, Iraya / Sta-Prest, Selena / Lucy Stoners, Kathleen / Bikini Kill. Our music - New wave / surf punk / cock rock.

4. Biggest pet peeves or hang-ups?

Leah - When my strap-on falls off at the wrong time.

5. Have you ever fucked a rock star? If yes, who?

Jill kissed Cyndi Lauper on her powdered cheek when she was 17. Also, Jill has fucked Lara from Cheesecake and Laura from God Is My Co-Pilot / Double Zero, and will fuck Kathleen Hanna in her upcoming film, "In Search of Margo-go".

6. What rock stars would you want to fuck?

Leah and Laura want to fuck Joan Jett, and Jill still wants to fuck all the Go-Go's.

7. Do you belong to a "queercore" scene?

Ha ha! Well, Riot Grrrl NYC has tried to remedy the lack of a queercore scene here by putting on cool shows with queer punk bands and shocking smut interludes, like the recent one in which girls had to eat pies from between other girls' legs. Jill and Laura won hands down cause they are two perverted chicks. The prizes were matching purple vibrators.

8. Future plans?

To come to your town to play. After the show the fans can participate in a cunnilingus line, like the one in Jill's movie "Frenzy" - available for viewing and masturbation from the Double Zero address. Lastly, to be rock stars so that you, dear readers, will want to fuck us.

To contact us for a tape or to play in your town, or to inquire about Jill's girl queerpunk flicks, write Double Zero.

Jill has moved. Her new address is:: POB 421912, San Francisco, CA 94142.

photo: Diana Morrow

"QUEERCORE"

The queer punk scene is really happening! It seems like every day I'm hearing about some fantastic new queer band. It's so exciting! I sent these short questionnaires out to a few of the bands I'm familiar with. What follows are brief bios of some of the newest, greatest stuff going on right now. It seems like right now this stuff is being treated as a novelty, but I don't think it's about to go away anytime soon.

Also, people criticize queer punk for lacking musicianship, or originality, as if those were the most important things to have in a **punk** band. All I can say is that I'm thrilled to see queers play anything outside of dance / rave / techno crap. I'm a rock'n'roll fag and you're going to have to give me something more than disco. And to all the people who think queer punk music is boring or mediocre, I say give it some time. You may not like it now, but new ideas build on past efforts, and things evolve. You just watch.

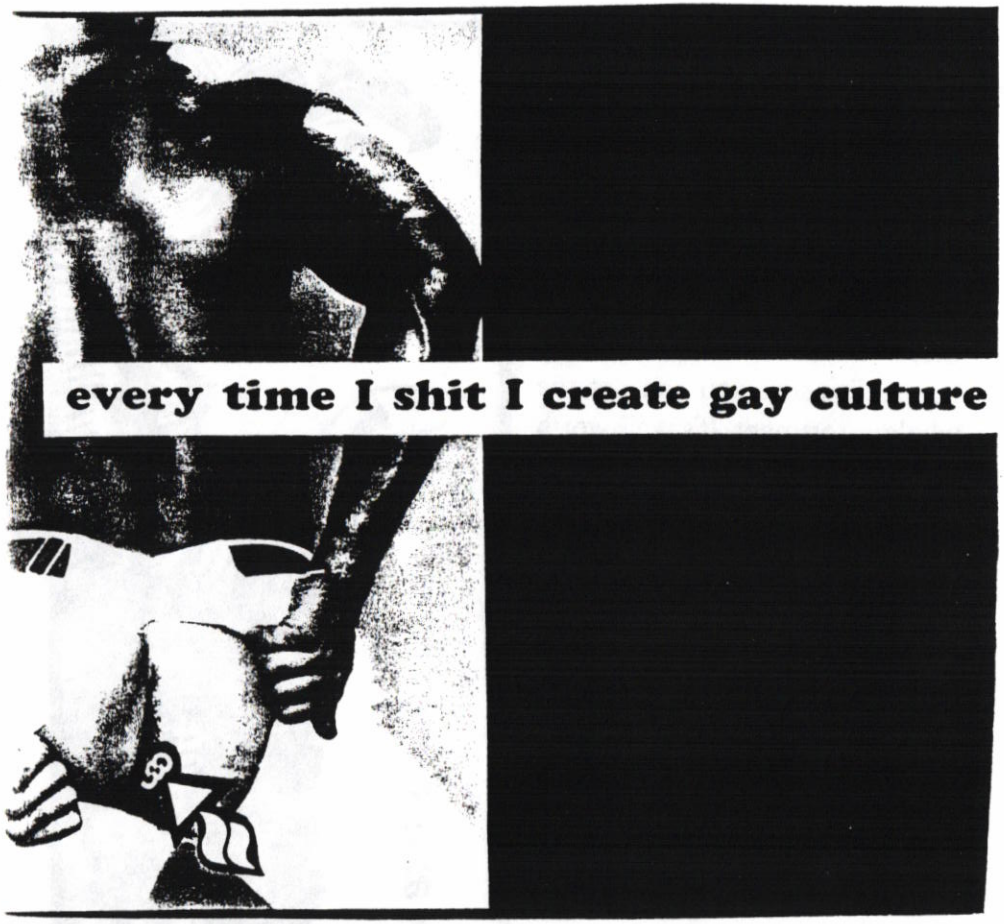
SIZE QUEEN

1. Who are you?
   Your enemy.
2. Why did you start this band?
   To destroy you.
3. Describe yourselves and/or your music.
   ELO.
4. Biggest pet peeves or hang-ups?
   Matt Wobensmiths.
   (hey, that's me! -ed.)
5. Have you ever fucked a rock star? If yes, who?
   Wouldn't you like to know, Matt.
6. Do you belong to a "queercore scene"?
   What's a queercore scene?
7. Future plans?
   To stalk and kill you.

Size Queen has a self-produced 7" single out, and other recorded music available. Write them a comforting letter at 1236 S. 8th St. №2, Philadelphia, PA 19147.

The flyers on the following pages were sent to me by a group calling itself "Queer Action Figures". They are great!! These are only a few of the many designs they have. Funny, mean-spirited, pissed-off, ironic - it's all there. If you send them a few bucks, I'm sure you can get the whole assortment. It's well worth it.

Write: 151 1st Ave. #82, New York City, NY 10003.



PUNK

On a more positive note. I've been inspired and converted to a new thing called "Punk Planet". For those of you who haven't seen it, it's a new magazine started to provide a more open-minded, contemporary regular punk magazine *ala* MRR. The writing is considerably more energetic and fresh, and reading it makes you realize how dated and obsolete the whole stupid, traditional "rock'n'roll" mentality really is. Definitely worthy of your whole-hearted support. Send away for your copy today.

And the alternative...

And to round this off, we have a third competing entity in the world of punk journalism, calling itself "Heart Attack". Editor Kent McClard has made a big stink about how narrow of a focus MRR has, and that somehow he can do better with his own publication. Unfortunately (and with all due respect), he seems to have created something even more regressive/shallow/narrow than it's inspiration. I would normally be in complete support of any effort to challenge the status quo, but Kent seems to continue to miss the point entirely. In his recent editorials, he laments about how queer/female/person of color bands don't have to be "good" to be considered good, and implying that it's somehow their fault that people tokenize them. It's been pointed out to him in several ways how important to many these bands/individuals have been, but he seems to have nothing but scorn for anyone who doesn't follow his warped, clichéd, and naive standards. I don't know what can be said to get the point across, but I encourage anyone out there to read his magazine and judge for yourself.

Stinky Poo !

Does anyone out there know of a good way to tell someone that their cologne/perfume is gross? I have to smell it every day at my job, and I swear it gets me physically ill! It's really a shame that people think that they have to smell like a skunk to attract other human beings. All I can say is that no matter <u>how</u> attractive I find someone to be, their cologne will ruin any chance of getting within fifteen feet of me. Pet peeve!!!

Now I will out you...

In previous issues of *Outpunk* I have compiled lists of queer bands and bands with queer members. The purpose of this was to show you that not only were queers everywhere, but that we can actually "rock" too. Sounds corny I know, but hearing that your favorite band/performer is queer like you is a great thing indeed, and there are so many queers in music out there that it's a crying shame that they continually hide behind hetero imagery and/or ambiguity.

Strangely enough, it's suddenly become "hip" to be queer in today's "alternative" scene. Bands that would merit a bombardment of rotten fruit in recent times suddenly claim to have a bisexual second guitarist, and suddenly the world pays attention? The climate of "tolerance" seems to have brought out a lot of queers, which is a great and necessary step. But it still doesn't change a whole lot. You be the judge.

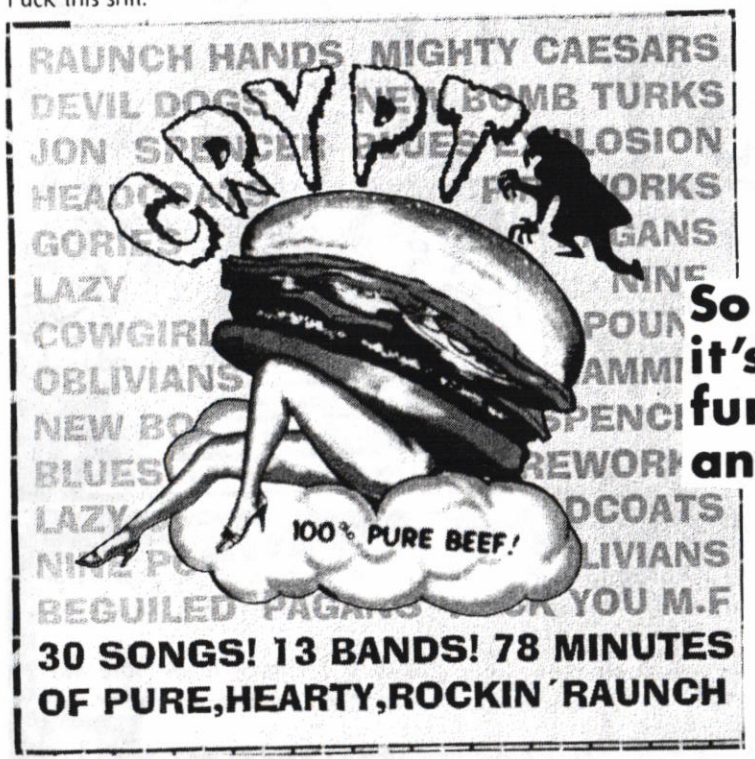
For me, a queer punk band has at least one out queer in the band, stands for queer issues, plays for a queer audience, and has the guts and good taste to explicitly sing about it. Let's cut the crap, shall we? As far as outing musicians in the public spotlight, it's of very little interest to me anymore. King Coffee of the Butthole Surfers, Linda Perry of the Four Non-Blondes, Josephine Wiggs of the Breeders, and the drummer for Hole - who really gives a shit?

Talkin' Shit

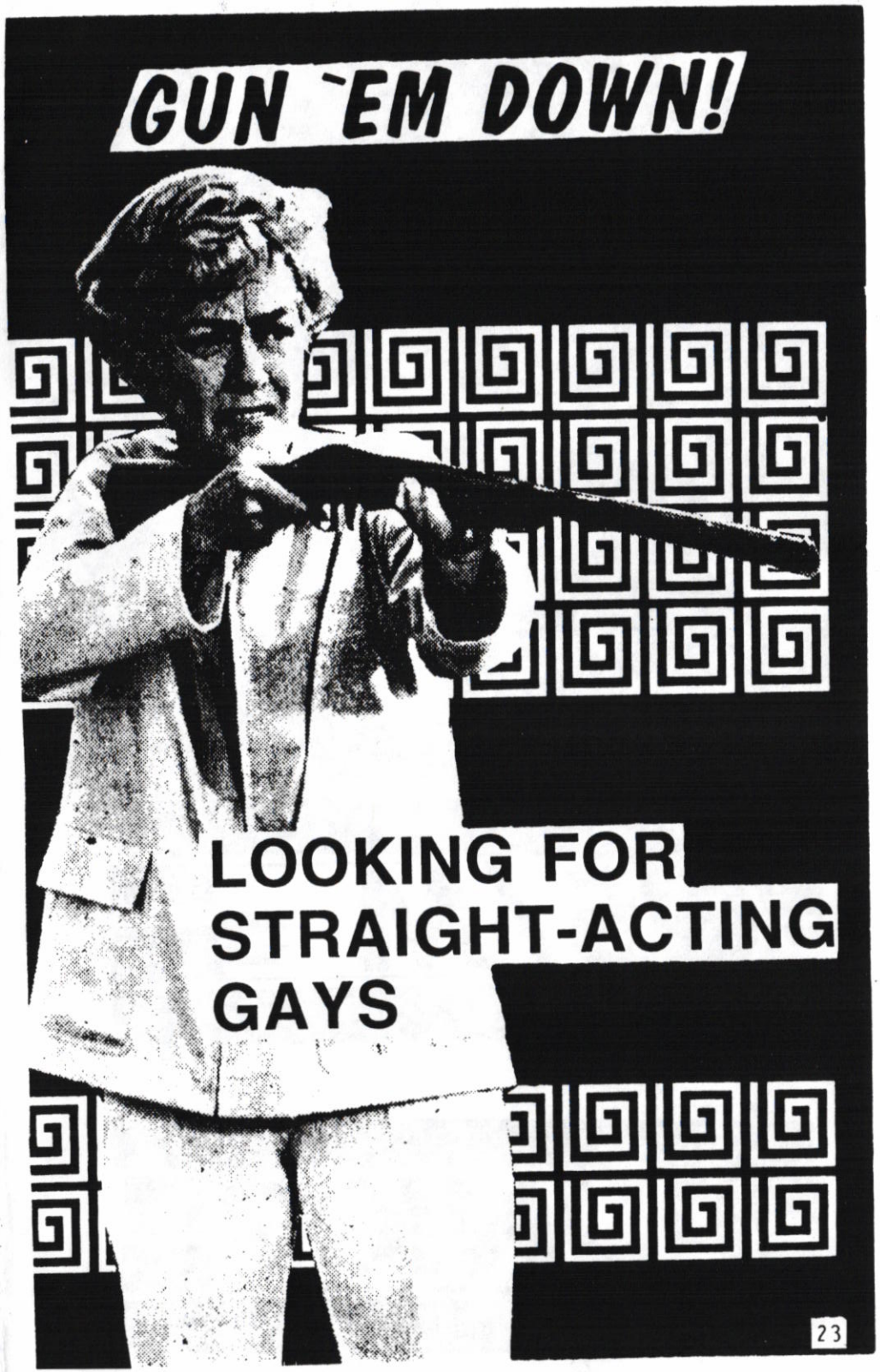
I quit working for Maximum Rock'n'Roll magazine after three years of reviews. the occasional column. and the "queer" themed issue. It was a hard decision to make. since working there was not only fun. but also very beneficial and full of perks. I decided it wasn't worth it.

I've always been aware of the reactionary. conservative elements in the mag. but I guess I thought of myself as being somewhat subversive for working within such a structure. It's certainly been vital for promoting stuff like this zine you're reading. However. I too have to draw the line somewhere. and I was forced to do it. After a seemingly endless barrage of SWM's and their paranoid. uptight. and prejudiced columns. comes a new columnist of the same sort. Now *that's* what I call variety! This guy. "Rev Norb" not only can't write. but has made/continues to make some of the most ignorant. racist/sexist/homophobic statements I have ever read in a "progressive" magazine. And all the "editor" can do is claim he has no control over content and that the readers are free to comment. Well. many have complained. and letters protesting this moronic crap have gone all but unanswered. And to think a columnist was dismissed within the last year for being "too right-wing" - but racism isn't right-wing? Enough of the fence-sitting and the tired. unchallenging old boys' network. Talk about chickenshit! Before all this happened. I was told that the magazine was going to take on a new direction. one that would "shake things up" and challenge people. Why can't we have the guts to "shake things up" on our own turf?

Maybe I've been fooling myself all along. Maybe I was too blind to see it before. Maybe the below record cover best sums it up. Who made these stupid rules. anyway? Fuck this shit.



So retro, it's not funny anymore.



photos: Miriam Basilio

S/M = PUNK ?

NEW - Sta-Prest single featuring these hits:

-Vespa Sex

-Rilly Bad Scene

-Powder Choice #2

-Elbo Grease

-Double Your Chance For A Date

comes with a split zine - *Fembot* and *Alien Religion*

The 7" is $3 ppd. from:
Lounge Singer Records
1280 Poquoson Ave.
Poquoson, VA 23662

4.4a Use feeler gauge to check gap when points are fully open

comeuppance zine

NAUGHTY KITTY NEEDS DISCIPLINE!
Small Tabby 8-10 LB (Silver/ Black, yellow eyes). "EVE"

LOST

CALICO KITTEN

WITH COLLAR THAT READS: SLAVE

IF FOUND PLEASE CALL

no more nice queers

issue #1 split with upslut #6

send 2 stamps or a trade to:
chris queer ohnesorge
1 meadway, bronxville, ny 10708

I haven't even scratched the surface in terms of information or what it's all about. I can't do everything for you. Like anything else, you gotta seek it out on your own.

I guess it boils down to letting you know that there are many, many more ways of expressing yourself than we are told, and to do what feels right to you rather than living up to other peoples' standards.

My main problem with the S/M community is the fact that everybody calls it the Leather Community. Leather is a particular fetish item. It does not encompass the whole community's desires. I thought S/M was the whole pain is pleasure thing. and the role-playing thing. I don't feel any kinship with a community of sexual outlaws that has its whole identity wrapped up in what a turn on it is to wear dead animals. I thought S/M was consensual. I have a feeling that those cows that were killed to make those rad chaps you just bought didn't consent to be killed for your master fetish. Get my drift? I can hear the die-hard S/M'ers going "where does this bitch get off?" I get off anywhere I please. thank you. but about five years ago I realized that I could get off without utilizing dead cows for my pleasure. I've never wanted to play by the rules of any community. and I don't care if S/M chicks think I'm a drag. There are plenty of things to fetishize and lovingly beat your fuckbuddy with until they're sore without using leather.

My only other issue with the S/M community is the fact that it can be so strict with the "rules". On occasion I've had friends of mine suddenly get into S/M and then bombard me with weird questions like "are you a top or bottom? You can't be both!". Well. yes I can be both. I enjoy playing whatever role I feel at the moment. not being restricted to just one. One minute I am tied to the bed. being slapped and spanked with a paint stirrer (good leather paddle substitute. cheap. available at any hardware store and makes a large thwack). and the next minute I'm tying a girl down with my fab rubber restraints I got at Stormy Leather and fucking her up the ass with a dandy black plastic butt plug.

Here are some pictures of me and Lara from the band Cheesecake dressing up. being silly. and demonstrating our non-leather S/M toys and fashion accessories.

Part 3
Me!

Hi. it's me Matt. and I guess this is a good opportunity to come out. in a sense. as an S/M punk rock faggot. I'm no expert and I'm not sure what I intend to accomplish by telling you this. except for the titillating thrill of indulging you with intimate details of my sex life.

I suppose it might not even be perceived as necessary to have to make the statement in the first place. but we're not easily exposed to the wide range of sexual possibilities. and ultimately. we cheat ourselves.

I can't even begin to explain what it means to me. because it's not easily described in words. It's something I crave and seek out if and when I can. I don't always want someone to dominate me. hurt me. or otherwise fulfill my desires. but hey. sometimes I do! I realize that there's a whole community and sets of rules that exist. and I have respect for anyone who is doing their thing. However. as with most aspects of gay culture. it's not exactly accessible to those without a lot of confidence or experience. It's often hard for me to come to terms with myself. I hate to admit that I don't have the answers to things. and to feel like I'm starting over all the time really frightens me. I guess it's just a lesson in self-discovery.

"Leather. to me. is what I really came out looking for."

S/M = PUNK ?

This is a three part piece on punks who are into S/M - sadomasochism. There are a lot of myths and stereotypes surrounding S/M sex. and this is not an attempt to either refute or support them. It is only three people's opinions on what this means to them.

Part 1:
Interview with Fish. editor of *Brat Attack zine.*

Me: What is Brat Attack?
Fish: Brat Attack is a zine we first put out in the summer of '91. It's subtitled "the zine for leatherdykes and other bad grrrls". I really just needed something to do. It was basically all our gripes and complaints and whining about the leather scene - it was like everything bad about the leather scene. Well. that's not necessarily true. but it was very much coming from the attitude of "fuck you - we're young. and we're smart. and we know better. and you're full of attitude" and of course we were just as full of attitude. But we sort of figured that out later. After that first issue where we got all our attitude out. we were really surprised to find out that it was really well-received. especially by some of the people whose attitudes I thought were kind of sucky. They were really supportive and they were like "yeah. those attitudes are really like yucky" and that was sort of interesting. From there it took off and sort of evolved. At this point. I'm ready to move on and pass the torch. I'm not as driven as I used to be. partly because of a new magazine called "Venus Infers ". It's also a leatherdyke magazine. and it publishes a lot of the same stuff that Brat Attack publishes. They publish a lot of fiction. but also a lot of the stuff I thought was important when I started Brat Attack. And they're doing it quarterly. so I'm pretty impressed with them.
Me: Are there any other zines or magazines that you know about that cover dyke S/M?
Fish: Well. there's Bad Attitude. which is all fiction. Also. a magazine called Wicked Women. There aren't really zines that cover dyke S/M.
Me: What is your connection to punk?
Fish: I sometimes call myself a punk dyke. but I'm not sure that I totally fit that label. I call myself that because that's the closest thing. I'm sort of in and out of the punk scene. The punk scene seems to revolve around music. and I'm not so much into music. When I entered into the leather community. I felt like a punk dyke. I was looking around and not seeing other "punk" girls. Funny hair was a big one. Since then there are a lot more punk women in the leather community. They used to be pretty separate communities.

The Leather Pride Flag

The Leather Pride flag has become a recognized symbol of the leather community. The leather community, in this case, encompasses those into leather, levi, S/M, bondage, uniforms, cowboys, rubber and other fetishes. The Leather Pride flag was first displayed on May 28, 1989, at the Mr. Leather contest in Chicago, and it was quickly adopted by leather/levi groups around the world.

Every day is Flag Day when you fly a Leather Pride flag!

RATED X OUTPUNK

but now they've come together a bit. Five years ago when I first entered the leather community. I was also hanging around with punk dykes who were really into roughing around and having a good time. It was a lot of rough sexual energy. They were doing those sorts of S/M things at home, but weren't interested in being in an organized leather community.

Me: Why do you suppose they didn't want to?

Fish: Well, at that time, it seemed more conservative and such. And it can tend to be more conservative, although they don't generally talk about politics. It's such a diverse community that the only way they can actually get together and exchange information is to...

Me: Put their politics aside?

Fish: Yeah, what they have in common is a certain sexual orientation, so they get together to share that.

Me: What is leather to you?

Fish: Leather to me is having really intense sex. I was really attracted to rough, intense sex, and I wasn't finding that in the dyke community. I was living in Montreal at the time. I was going to the university, and there were more academic dykes there. They seemed kind of de-sexualized. They just didn't talk about it. I just decided to move to San Francisco. I really wanted to pursue good, rough sex. Leather, to me, is what I really came out looking for. I'm a masochist. I love to have really rough sex. I like really intense stuff - intense pain, intense pleasure, or both. That's what I came to the scene looking for. Some people are looking for power games, licking someone's boots, doing their laundry. Fetishes - pretty much any kinky person who ends up gravitating toward the leather scene. It's a small community with a lot of different kinds of people in it. Anybody whose sex is frowned upon. We all wind up in the same place. We all help each other to get laid.

Me: Just like punk rock!

Fish: It's definitely a hodgepodge.

Me: Do you ever get into arguments, like "that's not leather - that doesn't belong?"

Fish: Yeah, oh yeah. I think within any community, people are so insecure that they're always comparing themselves to everyone else - who's doing what, does that mean that I'm more of this thing than you are? I think more people get into like who's heavier, who's lighter, are you into fetishes, or are you into pain, or domination and submission? I think that's true in any community, where people do that constant comparison. A lot of it has to with insecurity.

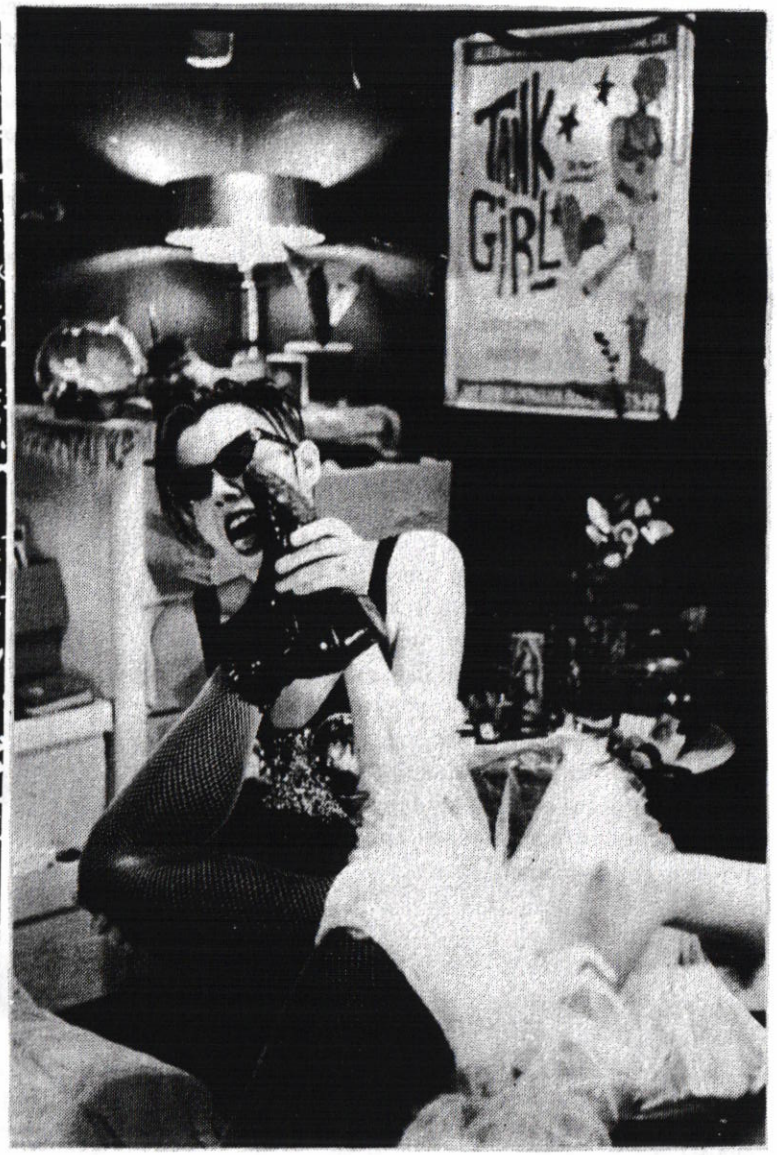
Me: I guess that's a good thing that it's not so well-defined...

Fish: Yeah, but I guess I get tired of hearing myself and other people constantly ask that.

Me: Well, if the point is to have fun and enjoy yourself and do what you want to do, then it's not really important what anybody else is doing.

Fish: I talked about that in the first issue of Brat Attack. I think people were looking at me thinking "who's this kid with attitude?".

Me: They're probably as insecure as you were. Just the same way that you might've been. I don't know whether we covered this, but what about ethics, class, age, social background..?



Jill licks those boots clean. Mmm mmm!

Part 2:
Vegan punk dykes confront the wacky world of S/M and the so-called "leather community"...

Hi. I'm Jill. I am 26 and am in the queer punk band Double Zero and I am pretty much vegan (although the occasional pastry does somehow find its way into my stomach). I'm a dyke and punk rock girl and sometimes when I have sex I do things that would be considered S/M. There's a couple of issues I have with the S/M community, and me being the rebellious troublemaker that I am, I thought I'd write this article for the S/M issue of Outpunk.

happened to get involved with a woman who also really liked sex, so we ended up just playing around together. The only information I had at that point was a little information from On Our Backs, so I knew a little bit about it. The furthest we ever got was fist-fucking, and bondage, and one time I was chasing her around my bedroom trying to smack her with my belt. I was like "god, I couldn't actually hit her" and I just couldn't imagine actually using it. So that was as far as I got with her. I didn't start doing more serious S/M until I moved to San Francisco. My first actual encounter with real live S/M dykes was at the Michigan Women's Music Festival. It's kind of funny, because the festival has been known in the past to fuck with the leatherdykes, and due to all the publicity, people know that there are a lot of leatherdykes there. So I went to a workshop. I was totally terrified, wasn't sure that I belonged. I just had this vague feeling that I was into this sort of stuff. One of the women invited me to this party they were having, and I had all these illusions. I just imagined a writhing mass of flesh - I would come in and some hand would reach out. I had no idea what they did. I just had this very vague, threatening idea of what would happen. Of course I went to the party and nothing happened, and I was very disappointed. It was actually kind of boring.

Me: What happened?

Fish: I went into this tent, and everyone was just sitting around. I think I just didn't realize that at a lot of parties, people just didn't know each other, particularly at this one. So, a lot of the women were just watching. Somebody was tied up to a tent pole, and somebody was whipping them very lightly. One other woman was just sort of crawling around. I was just wishing there was more to be afraid of. I didn't actually do any other S/M until I met the woman I'm with now. She was sort of a novice at the time. The kind of S/M I do is based on the kind of stuff we do together. The kind of stuff I've done otherwise has been casual on an emotional level: fun, but just a little different.

Suggested reading:

Books:

Lesbian S/M Safety Manual, edited by Pat Califia (Alyson.1988). Useful info for all.

Coming To Power, edited by Samois (Alyson, 1987). An anthology of writings by leatherdykes.

Leatherfolk, edited by Mark Thompson (Alyson, 1991). An anthology of writings by S/M folk of all persuasions.

Leatherman's Handbook, by Larry Townsend. For gay men.

Magazines:

Bad Attitude, POB 390110, Cambridge, MA 02139. Nasty dyke porn with a good dose of S/M.

On Our Backs, 526 Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Dyke porn ranging from vanilla to medium.

Brat Attack, POB 40754, San Francisco, CA 94140-0754. Sample issue $5.00.

Quim, BM 2182, London, England, WC1N 3XX. Beautiful, very expensive, with dyke porn and intelligent commentary.

Venus Infers, 2215-R Market St., Suite 294, San Francisco, CA 94114. New, impressive women's S/M mag. Fiction and commentary.

Wicked Women, POB 1349, Strawberry Hills, Sydney, Australia, 2012. Glossy, witty, and sexy. The original brats.

Drummer and **Dungeon Master**: Desmodus, POB 410390, San Francisco, CA 94141-0390. Mostly gay male fiction, beefcake, and info.

Fish: I would say that people in the leather community come from all different kinds of backgrounds. One thing about it that I think is true is that it's mostly a white community, and the Outcasts (dyke S/M group) has had some stuff around that. Someone was saying that they knew a lot of people of color who were into S/M but were closeted about it, perhaps because it's a mostly white community. Also, to some people, it's just another stigma, like who the hell wants to deal with that? Being out as a leather person, maybe not in SF in your own little ghetto - it has it's costs.

Me: OK, so we've gone into the leather scene a bit here, and we touched on a few areas. Let's talk about more general stuff, like terminology. You mentioned the word "scene" awhile back, and it amused me because that word is such a buzz word among punks. You know, "our scene sucks", "our scene rules"...

Fish: Or "the Seattle Scene" or "the San Francisco scene"...

Me: Exactly. Which brings to mind more punk rock connotations. Let's talk about vocabulary, and their meanings.

Fish: Well, let's see, for starters, there's "tops", "bottoms", and "switches". And I would say that the majority of people are switches, whether they identify themselves that way or not. A bottom is somebody who likes to get tied up, likes to, you know, clean the toilet. Basically, likes to get into a situation where somebody else has the say. A top is somebody who is going to run things within a situation. Say you're a top - I would say to a top, let's do a scene. A switch is someone who bottoms and tops, depending on who they're with. Most people do that.

Me: Well, this is good, actually. How do you get involved in something like this?

Fish: I've actually had a lover for the last four years. I haven't been doing the S/M singles scene. I have played with other people, but mostly my lover. That's just as hard as it is anywhere else. Aside from doing stuff with my lover, I would just make a date. I

would just call someone up, or a lot of times I've just played at parties. "Let's go to the party, let's do a scene" and a scene is just a set period of time where you play with them, bottoming to them. Bottoming is a verb, too.

Me: So, a scene is a scenario?

Fish: The word just basically means from the point that you enter into this situation to the point that it ends. "Scenario" just sounds sort of dramatic, although some people are into setting up a big drama, getting props and costumes. I'm not as much into that. I'd rather get down and get to it. Some people are in scene all the time, which means that they're a couple, and they've agreed that one person is always the bottom, and one person is always the top. Then they're always in scene. There's really not that many people who can do that. I couldn't do it. It'd be a lot of work.

Me: So a scene is when something starts and stops?

Fish: It's kind of like when you go from normal, everyday "hi, how are you, nice to see you" to "yes sir, yes ma'am" or whatever you want. It just depends on what kind of a scene is taking place. A lot of people try to set up boundaries, so you know when you're in and when you're out. For me, when I come out, I need to come out. I like to know when it's over. Some people are like, when the collar goes on, you're in scene, and when the collar comes off, you're out, and you assume normal life. People do different kinds of things.

Me: So, what about a "safe word"?

Fish: A safe word is a good thing. Negotiation is also a good word. When people play, there's a whole etiquette about communicating, which is more true on the west coast. On the east coast, it seems more like you don't talk to your bottom, you don't talk to your top, you just do your thing. Here it's just so west coast - we negotiate, we talk about our feelings, our limits, and all of that stuff. If you're going to do a major scene, most people that I know will have a date beforehand and say OK, this is what my experience is, these are the things I don't think I want to do, these are the things I think I'm interested in but don't know. Especially if you're a novice, and you're like, "I haven't really done anything, but I know that this really turns me on, and that really turns me off". Just so the top has an idea of what they're getting into. A safe word is, when you're in the middle of a scene, if something goes wrong, or things are getting too intense for you, you have a word that you can say that just means to stop right now. You also might have a word that just means things are too hard for you physically, and you just need this particular thing to cool down. Some people have a word that just means psychologically, it's too much; physically you're fine, and you don't want this scene to end. I've done scenes with people who will remind you in the middle, about your safe word. You can get so out there, and so high that you forget what your words are. People definitely take that stuff seriously.

Me: What if you just say "stop"?

Fish: I do. With people whom I know, I haven't used a safe word. It's just because I don't do a lot of drama in my scenes.I don't have a problem with just talking to my tops. The way that I play is the way I play with my lover. We just know each other really well. I can say anything I want to her. If you're in some highly dramatic scene with someone you don't know very well, and you're into screaming "no no no, please, no" , then you want a word that's totally unrelated, like "umbrella". If you don't know somebody, they're not necessarily psychic. They don't know if you're thrashing around, that you're having a great time, or that things are too much. There can be a fine line sometimes. All these different things about being safe are just good to know - you have the choice on how safe you want to be. That's why people get into S/M in the first place - they want this thing that is not allowed, so they end up in this community. There are some people who like to play right on the edge of being safe, and they might get trashed by some other players, but as long as you agree to play that way, I think it's OK. You have to take responsibility for yourself. There's people who do not play safe who I would not play with, who I think are fucked up people.

Me: It's just like how you interact with everyday people - they can be fucked up too.

Fish: Yeah, you just have to watch out for yourself. If you go home with someone you don't know and let them tie you up, you gotta be aware that there is a possibility that it is not a good idea.

Me: You have to stick up for what you want.

Fish: The more you negotiate with the person you want to play with, and try to figure out what they want, the better off you're going to be. There is the occasional person who is going to fuck you over, as there always is in life. A lot of times things happen just out of a particular misunderstanding.

Me: What advice would you give to someone, possibly a young person, who feels that they might be into leather, or be a sadist or a masochist?

Fish: Well, a lot of it depends on whether they know anybody else who's in to the same sort of stuff. They should definitely get as much real information as they can - fiction doesn't tell you much about how it really works. When I was starting to think that I was into some sort of rough sex, I was not in a community that supported that. I just